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ABSTRACT

The six articles in this journal issue deal with teachers intervening in the writing process (what happens before the student turns in a paper for a grade). The articles focus on the following topics: (1) some objectives and classroom practices for teaching the composing process; (2) a composing profile and a system for developing a student centered writing curriculum; (3) the need for teacher awareness and response to "writer based prose," those preliminary drafts of compositions that reveal both the seeds of ideas that students need to develop and the stylistic flaws they need to eliminate; (4) reducing writing anxiety in a cross-cultural educational experience; (5) sentence combining and paragraph building using standard textbooks like Warriner's "English Grammar and Composition"; and (6) what not to teach about the research paper in college freshman English classes. (RL)

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NEW YORK STATE ENGLISH COUNCIL

the English Record

VOLUME XXXII SUMMER 1981 NUMBER 3

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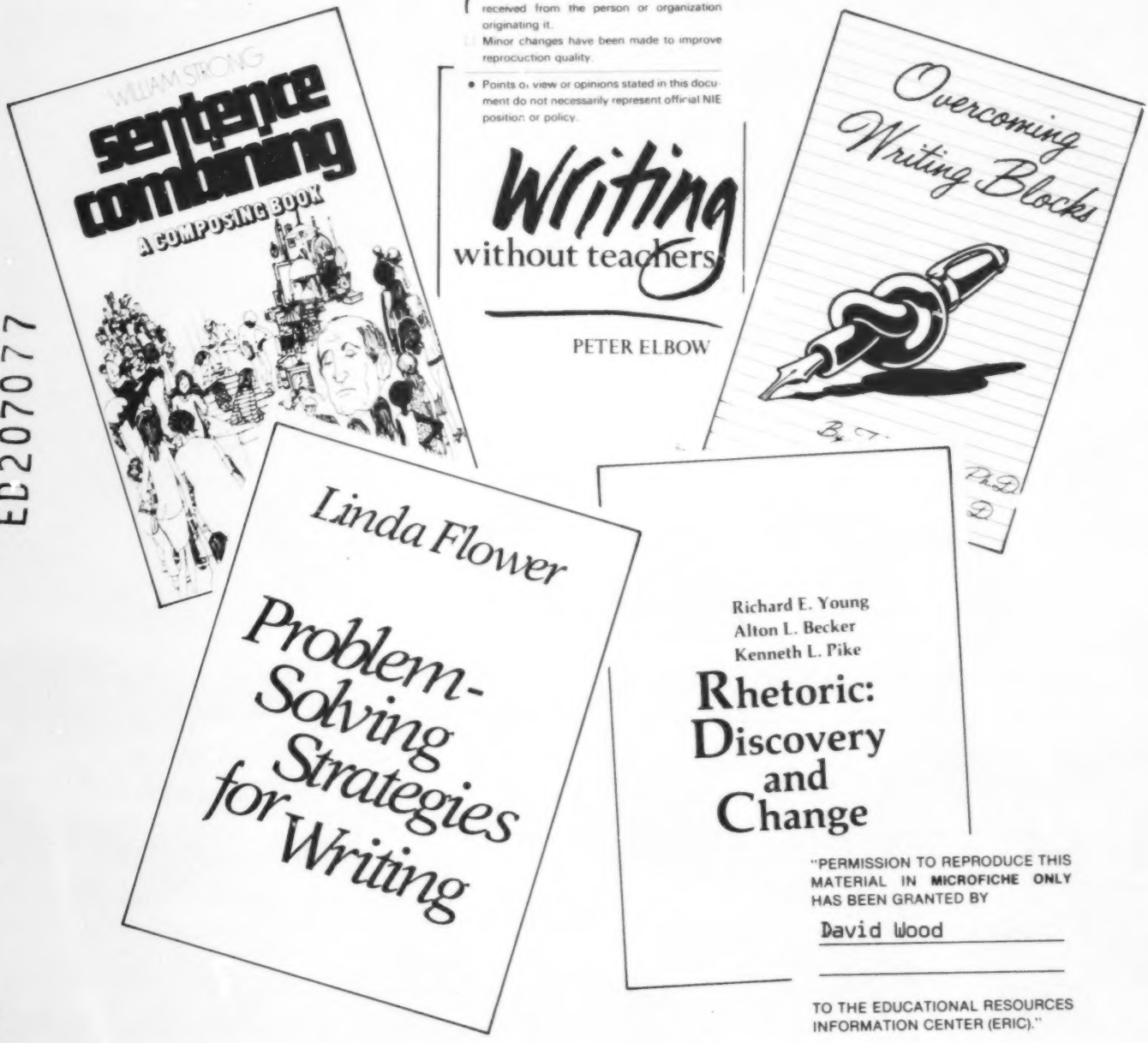
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Intervening in the Writing Process

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For the Record

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Editors' Notes

When we planned this issue, we intended to call it "Theory into Practice." That's a nice, vague theme that can cover a multitude of articles and subjects. The papers that were submitted, however, all dealt with writing, and on further examination we found that all had to do with what happens before the student turns in a paper for a grade. Hence, the revised theme for this issue, "Intervening in the Writing Process."

At times we worry that "the writing process" will become another of those catch-phrases that have plagued education—like "back to basics," "teach the whole child," and "multi-media." Such phrases mean something different to everyone, and, despite the laudable intentions behind them, seldom affect everyday education more than superficially.

"The writing process," we hope, will be different. Good teachers have always known that if you don't do *something* before students hand in their final papers, those papers will be awful. But knowing what to do and finding the time to do it have been roadblocks. The typical English teacher, with perhaps 100 or 150 students, simply cannot read several rough drafts from each student or write several paragraphs of helpful comments on each paper.

Fortunately, we are beginning to learn a great deal about how good writers really work, and thus the authors published in this issue are able to give some practical suggestions for ways to intervene in the writing process. Those who address this subject directly begin with some theoretical material summarizing what is known about the process, while admitting that there is still much to be learned. Some of our authors cover nearly the whole process, while others discuss just a part of it. Whichever approach they take, we hope you will find their suggestions practical and worth trying.

Of course, some of the articles have main themes which are only peripheral to the writing process. But even these people recognize that it's what the teacher does during the preliminary stages of the students' composing that determines whether the final product of that composing will be worth reading.

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It has always been one of the ironies of publications like *The English Record* that those who write for it are university professors, while those who read it are just ordinary teachers like your humble editors. The editors, who know perfectly well that "ordinary teachers" have plenty of ideas worth sharing with their colleagues, wish that these ideas could get published. Some do, of course, but lack of time and lack of the publish-or-perish incentive that bedevils the university professor combine to ensure that the "ordinary teacher" does much less publishing than the professor.

However, like other publications we continue to seek articles from you, our readers. It is not necessary that you send us a complete, finished draft. If you will just write us a letter telling us what your idea is and how you propose to develop it, we can tell you whether to go ahead and write it up. That would save everyone a lot of time. If you wish, will also give you some suggestions about how to write the article.

In This Issue

Thematic Issue: Intervening in the Writing Process

2 Some Objectives and Classroom Practices for Teaching the Composing Process . . . . . *Richard C. Freed*

6 Toward System in a Student-Center Curriculum . . . . . *Stephen North*

11 It's Dirty to Keep Yelling Digression . . . . . *Thomas Newkirk*

14 Reducing Writing Anxiety in a Cross-Cultural Educational Experience . . . . . *Judith A. Horowitz*

18 Sentence Combining and Paragraph Building with Warriner's . . . . . *Robert A. Schwegler, M. Beverly Swan, Alison Burns-Katz*

22 The Research Paper: What Not to Teach in Freshman English . . . . . *Thomas J. Morrissey*

24 Column: Evaluating Novels for Young Adults . . . . . *Naomi Z. Katcher*

Richard C. Freed

Some Objectives and Classroom Practices for Teaching the Composing Process

A RECENT BROADCAST of the television program *20/20* illustrated how very hard the comedian Rodney Dangerfield works to "get no respect." Considered one of the best "one-liners" in the business, Dangerfield spends hours composing and revising his comedy routine. After writing his jokes, he delivers them to himself, records the delivery, plays it back on a tape cassette, revises the routine, tries it out in his "laboratory"—his own club in New York City, evaluates his audience's response, rewrites the routine, presents it on the road, listens to a recording of that performance, and revises accordingly. Although Dangerfield gets no respect, he does receive what every serious writer desires: an immediate and recognizable response from his audience.

Most writers, of course, do not have the advantage of meeting their audience face-to-face, nor do they usually benefit from having their work so unambiguously evaluated. For Dangerfield a joke works or it does not, and whether it does or doesn't is easily determined. Yet most professional writers—and I would include in that category those who write frequently on the job, whether poets, business executives, or teachers—most professional writers seek immediate response from their audiences. The poet discusses his work with other poets and presents it at poetry readings. The executive usually writes his report with others and receives additional response as the report moves up or down the organizational hierarchy.

We need only reflect a moment to discover the various kinds of feedback we receive when composing a critical paper. Consider a not untypical example of the writing process of a college or high school teacher. Assume the audience is other colleagues; the discourse, a critical essay. Some of the stages in her composing process might be as follows:

1. Coming up with ideas for the essay and discussing them with colleagues.
2. Consulting published works and testing the ideas contained in them against her own.
3. Writing the draft and having it reviewed by colleagues.
4. Presenting the writing as a paper and receiving the audience's response.
5. Revising accordingly and having a colleague read the revision.
6. Submitting the essay for publication and receiving upon rejection, if she's lucky, critical comments from referees.
7. Revising again and submitting again.
8. Publishing the work and reading letters written to the journal in response to the essay.
9. Still later, revising the essay to have it published in a collection of essays.

Richard C. Freed, a member of the English Department of Eastern Kentucky University, has published previously in The Record.

At each stage in the process the teacher receives feedback—from known colleagues, from unknown referees, even from published works discussing issues similar to those contained in the essay.

Until fairly recently students in many composition classes were denied the amount of critical response many of us have come to expect in our own writing. Only at what they believed was the end of the writing process did they receive an assessment of their work. The teacher made the assignment and the student wrote it alone, submitting the work for a grade, a final evaluation which sealed the product, leading him to believe that the process had ended. From start to finish, closure was demanded in as little time as a week. Many teachers now believe this method, known familiarly as "teaching the product" because it focuses more on the final product of writing than it does on the process of composing, does not teach writing the way it is actually written.

These teachers also believe that teaching the product may be responsible, at least in part, for many writing problems students have. Because vital stages in the writing process are either truncated or not taught at all, the subjects of students' essays tend to be inadequately thought out and their paragraphs undeveloped. The lack of development is especially evident when students are not given formative evaluation—that provided during the composing process—as they work through so-called prewriting stages where they can use various discovery procedures (or heuristics) to investigate their topics and find supportive detail to illustrate their points. Moreover, since the only assessment provided the student is usually the instructor's evaluation of the finished product, the student cannot help but feel that his real audience is the teacher. This feeling appears to persist no matter how much the teacher insists she is not the student's audience but his editor. But when the only assessment is the threatening symbol known as the grade, risk-taking and creativity are discouraged, and experimentation and linguistic growth are inhibited because the student perceives his audience as threatening. The consequences of this threat are well-known. They are evident stylistically, in tight writing, uncertain or unconfidently expressed ideas, tentative voice, and lifeless prose in general. Unlike the product approach to teaching writing, the process approach attempts to make students aware of the ways writers compose, of the stages of composition as well as the appropriate strategies to employ and the frequent problems encountered at each stage.

Writing is a skill as well as an art, and like all complicated skills, it develops slowly—even, some say, "glacially." The

development involves mastery of what I would call genre—the genre of the sentence, of the paragraph, of the essay, and, to use the term even more loosely, the genre of rhythm and style. As reasonably skilled writers, we have stored in our memories sentence patterns, whether periodic or loose, forms of thesis statements, a sense of the paragraph, and the structure of the essay. We have internalized these forms and structures by reading widely the prose of familiar essayists and great novelists. We have a sense of baroque style and plain style, of figurative writing and of tight, reasoned, objective writing. And thus we know, depending upon our purpose and our audience, which genre to employ at which place in the discourse. Certainly we hadn't these skills when we took freshman composition; we probably did not begin to master many of the genre until graduate school or after.

Thus we need to make clear to our students that developing effective writing skills takes considerable time, and that beginning writers, as well as accomplished ones, make mistakes. And they make them all the time, whether they be mechanical, grammatical, organizational, structural, or strategic. These mistakes are natural, normal—and beneficial because they are part of learning. Thus, making students conscious of the necessity and benefit of error is one objective in teaching the writing process.

But the student can only understand the benefit of error if he perceives the teacher, not as an authoritarian figure who punishes for mistakes, but rather as a coach who accepts error as part of the learning process. Thus, creating a non-threatening environment is a second objective, and it fosters a third—encouraging students to take risks. By taking risks, the student invites further failures and the learning that follows. He experiments with different syntactical structures, voices, tones, and organizational and structural patterns because he is no longer quite so afraid of those unknowns and the problems of exploration.

A fourth objective of the process approach is, naturally, to make students aware that composing is a process, and a fifth objective is to provide feedback at each stage of the process. As we shall see, the source of response is not necessarily the teacher only, but the students' peers as well. That is why I will include collaboration as a final objective, because writing, not only in the discovery stages but in the revising and editing stages also, is often a collaborative effort.[1]

In short, it is important for writing teachers to understand that error is normal and beneficial, that a non-threatening environment encourages experimentation, that risk-taking is important for linguistic growth, that composing is a process that can be taught in stages, that feedback is important in each stage of the process, and that this response should originate not only from the teacher but perhaps more importantly from the students' peers. Now, of course, a large number of instructors teaching the product approach also understand the importance of some of these objectives. Meeting these objectives, however, is essential in teaching the composing process.

Before outlining a possible teaching plan for the first several weeks of a beginning composition course, I think it necessary to discuss what kind of discourse might be taught in those weeks. Janet Emig, James Britton, and Linda Flower all distinguish between writing written more-or-less for oneself and writing written specifically for others. These theorists' terms for the former are, respectively, *reflexive, expressive,* and *writer-based* prose, and for the latter, *extensive, transactional,* and *reader-based* prose.[2] Emig and Britton believe that whatever the discourse, even if the final product is transactional or extensive (that is, explicitly directed to an audience other than the writer), the process of writing that discourse should begin in the expressive phase. "An essential part of the writing process," Britton believes, "is explaining the matter to oneself." The writer must get his content "right with the self" (p. 28) before he can communicate it to others. Because autobiographical narrative allows the student to rely more on her own resources and to get in touch with herself, I begin the first-semester composition course with this form of discourse.

The teacher's principal goal in the first weeks of class, it seems to me, is to create a non-threatening environment, the purposes of which are, first, to help the student write freely to overcome his writing blocks and improve his self-concept,[3] and discover the enjoyment and satisfaction writing can bring; and second, to discover a support group who will provide him counsel, guidance, and assessment through all the stages of the writing process. Numerous techniques can be used to achieve these purposes, and thus the practices following are not meant to be prescriptive but indicative of what can be done in the first several weeks during which students will be composing their personal-experience essay. The schedule for these weeks is listed below:

Day	Activity
1	introduction to the course; discussion of the writing process; free writing; journal assignments
2	diagnostic essay
3	free writing; voluntary oral sharing of free writings
4	introduction to the texts; free writing
5,6	introduction of a classmate; free writing (time permitting)
7	distribution and discussion of formative, summative, peer- and self-evaluation sheets; discussion of group role playing; modeling responses to free writing
8	discussion of a well-written, personal narrative essay (handout); role-playing emphasized as class responds
9	assignment of groups; each group discusses members' writing for 15 minutes; members read aloud
10,11	no class; scheduled 10-15 minute conferences; students read drafts aloud; teacher suggests areas to be fleshed-out through free writing.
12	group sharing of revised drafts (read aloud)
13	another class discussion of a well-written, personal narrative
14	class feedback of 1st 2 paragraphs of students' essays
15,16, 17	discussion of sentence strategies, style, voice, audience, etc.; intensive sentence combining drills
18	discussion of editing and proofreading
19	personal-narrative essay due

You will note that on days 1, 3, and 4 the class engages in free writing, probably the most useful activity for helping students overcome their writing blocks and finding an effective voice. A good discussion of free writing can be found in Ken Macrorie's *Telling Writing*. The best discussion is in Peter Elbow's *Writing Without Teachers*, a book also important for its insights on the writing process.

I have found free writing to be the only discovery procedure necessary in the first weeks, though tagmemic invention is helpful for description; and brainstorming, the journalistic formula, and the pentad are useful in teaching exposition.[4] I have my students write freely every day, both in their journals [5] and during the first five minutes of class. Indeed, I try not to enter the classroom until five minutes past the hour when, invariably, most students are still writing. I also encourage them to write freely at any point in their drafts when they are blocked or where a character, event, or scene needs fleshing out.

On the first day, after one or two five-minute free writings (which I compose as well), I have students sketch a portrait of a good friend to whom they would like to send a letter.[6] This activity allows the students to visualize a non-threatening audience. Writing blocks frequently occur when writers have a vague conception of audience or perceive the audience as threatening. When beginning writers do not perceive this threat, however, they write with more assurance and tend to recognize more fully the needs of their audience.

Another reason for the portrait requires a discussion of hemisphericity, the significance of which, for teaching composing, there isn't enough space to discuss. But a few points are worth mentioning.[7] The brain consists in part of left and right hemispheres which process information differently. We are generally unaware of this difference because the hemispheres are connected and integrated by the corpus callosum. In individuals, usually those suffering from severe epileptic seizures, who have had the corpus callosum severed, the hemispheric split is evident. At any time, one hemisphere tends to dominate. The left hemisphere, processing information sequentially, dominates when problems require solutions that are analytic, temporal, linear, logical, or rational. The right hemisphere, processing information holistically, solves problems requiring solutions that are synthetic, non-temporal, spatial, intuitive, or non-rational. The right side, then, can be important in the invention stages of writing; the left side dominates in the editing stages. Because the right brain functions holistically, perceiving overall patterns and structures, it is responsible for recognizing faces. Thus, having students sketch a portrait activates that hemisphere which can be most important in the early stages of the writing process.

After sketching the portrait, the students compose, in a 10-15 minute free writing, a letter to their friend in which they narrate an important event in their lives. This narrative will usually become the first draft of their essay. For the next ten days or so, the students engage in free writing daily, either in class or outside of class, by writing in their journals. Each writing is focused upon a specific aspect of the narrative, and none of them is revised during this period. Closure must be scrupulously avoided, for the students are not yet trying to polish but to explore. Research, by the way, reports that skilled writers avoid closure much longer than do unskilled ones.[8]

On day 3 volunteers are asked to read their drafts to the class, after which only positive responses are allowed. By suggesting where specific areas of the narrative could be expanded or improved, responders give direct feedback to the writer. The teacher, of course, can respond too, though cautiously and conditionally, and he might even read his own draft, making known its weaknesses and asking help from the class. On days 5 and 6, to provide the class with a sense of itself, each student introduces another whom he or she has interviewed outside of class.

On day 7, the students read and discuss handouts they themselves will use to evaluate, not only the final drafts of their essays, but also the processes they engaged in to compose their essays. The handouts are designed to help students identify criteria important in personal narratives, to reinforce the importance of the formative stages of writing, and to help them set specific goals for their drafts.[9] Distributed also are handouts suggesting ways groups can work effectively to solve problems. To illustrate various roles group members can play, I and three volunteers form a model group in the center of the room. After one of the group members reads his or her draft, the group talks about the essay, trying out different roles and responses. After the groups are officially formed on day 9, they try to respond similarly.

Days 10 and 11 are devoted to 10-15 minute conferences with each student, who reads her draft and receives appropriate feedback.

On day 14 students bring to class (as I do also) the revised first two paragraphs of their essays. Sitting in a circle, we pass the paragraphs to the right, and for about seven minutes read the paragraphs and record our responses on a half-sheet of paper. Then we pass the paragraphs to the right again, read, respond, pass right, and so forth until the end of the hour, at which time the students' own writing and the responses to it are returned. By the end of class, each student has six or seven written responses to his or her writing. (Variations of this activity are explained in the 1979-80 edition of the NCTE publication, *Classroom Practices in Teaching English*, pp. 124-29). On days 15-17 we discuss sentence strategies, voice, and style with particular emphasis on sentence combining exercises (as research has shown, sentence combining increases significantly the quality of students' writing[10]).

Subsequent units can be scheduled similarly, or any number of other approaches can be tried. Bruce Appleby at Southern Illinois University keeps drafts of his own writing to allow his students to see his own writing process. Sondra Perl at the New York Writing Project had her students compose aloud on a tape cassette, after which transcripts were made so participants could analyze their own composing processes. I've begun having my students compose their essays, from their first ideas to their final drafts, on a "composing/revising instrument" I designed—sheets of paper divided into three columns, one for planning, one for drafting, and one for self-criticism. This "instrument" provides the student a complete record of all her drafts, makes her conscious of the recursiveness rather than the linearity of the writing process, illustrates the complexity and richness of composing, and when shared with other students, illustrates the diversity of composing processes and shows reluctant revisers that revision involved more than simple deletion, addition, or substitution, but also planning, re-viewing, and reformulation of idea, structure, conception of audience, tone, style, persona, and voice. The instrument also allows me to locate obstacles in the students' composing processes.

In short, there are as many ways of teaching the writing process as there are teachers and writers. But no matter which methods are used, the teaching of *composing* rather than

composition has great benefits, for it allows us to participate in an act of creation, from a work's germinating idea to its growth, development, and fruition. Once the teacher shifts his role from dispassionate evaluator to concerned collaborator, he teaches a dynamic process rather than a static product. He begins to learn about creation as it is engaged in by all writers. He can study his students' sequential drafts as he would study Yeats's notebooks or the interpolations in the drafts of Hawthorne's unfinished romances or the changes in Whitman's poems from the 1855 to the Deathbed Edition of *Leaves of Grass*. True, his students' work is not as elegant as that of major authors, but the rhetorical paths his students follow and the pitfalls into which students stumble are not dissimilar from those negotiated by the very finest writers. Just as important, teaching the writing process makes the teacher conscious of his own composing strategies so he can not only improve his own writing but also be able to communicate his new-found insights to his students.

The study of composition today extends far beyond the traditional boundaries of rhetoric and linguistics. It now comprises cognitive and developmental psychology, the philosophies of language and cognition, neurology and neurophysiology, error analysis, discourse theory, evaluation, and testing; and its methodologies produce both empirical research and philosophical inquiry. Its major thrust, it seems to me, is to comprehend the mystery of creative processes, and thus it takes as its province, not only the rhetorical analyses of both classic and modern writers, but also the composing strategies of college as well as elementary and secondary school writers at all levels of development. From the study of composing we are beginning to understand how and why it is that skilled and unskilled writers compose as they do, as well as how the unskilled writers we confront everyday can be taught by proven methods to increase their writing ability and reacquaint themselves with the power and joy of expression they knew as children.

Notes

[1] On collaborative writing, see Kenneth Bruffee, "Collaborative Learning: Some Practical Models," *College English*, 34 (1973), 634-43; Thom Hawkins, *Group Inquiry Techniques for Teaching Writing* (Urbana: NCTE and ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills, 1976); Carol M. Jacko, "Small Group Triad: An Instructional Mode for the Teaching of Writing," *College Composition and Communication*, 29 (1978), 290-92; and Richard Gebhardt, "Teamwork and Feedback: Broadening the Base of Collaborative Writing," *CE*, 42 (1980), 69-74.

[2] James Britton, *The Development of Writing Abilities*, 11-18 (London: Macmillan, 1975); Janet Emig, *The Composing Processes of Twelfth Graders* (Urbana: NCTE, 1971); and Linda Flower, "Writer-Based Prose: A Cognitive Basis for Problems in Writing," *CE*, 41 (1979), 19-37.

[3] On the relationship between students' writing skills and self-concept, see Marie Jean Lederman, "A Comparison of Student Projections: Magic and the Teaching of Writing," *CE*, 34 (1973), 674-89; and Andrea A. Lunsford, "The Content of Basic Writers' Essays," *CCC*, 31 (1980), 278-90.

[4] A good discussion of brainstorming, the journalistic formula and the pentad is in Dean Memering and Frank O'Hare, *The Writer's Work* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1980). See especially the accompanying instructor's manual. Tagmemic invention is discussed in Richard E. Young, Alton L. Becker, and Kenneth L. Pike, *Rhetoric: Discovery and Change* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1970). For a more workable model than the matrix presented in Young, Becker, and Pike, see Charles W. Kneupper, "Revising the Tagmemic Heuristic: Theoretical and Pedagogical Considerations," *CCC*, 31 (1980), 160-68.

[5] A very good, recent discussion of journal keeping is Toby Fulwiler, "Journals Across Disciplines," *English Journal*, 69 (1980), 14-19.

[6] This activity I learned from Donald Gallehr of the Northern Virginia Writing Project.

[7] An interesting and very readable discussion of hemisphericity is Betty Edwards, *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain* (Los Angeles: J. P. Tarcher, 1979). For the most recent research on the subject, see Benjamin M. Glassner, "Preliminary Report: Hemispheric Relationships in Composing," *Journal of Education*, 162 (1980), 74-95.

[8] See, for example, Linda Flower and John R. Hayes, "The Cognition of Discovery: Defining a Rhetorical Problem," *CCC*, 31 (1980), 21-32; and Nancy Sommers, "Revising Strategies of Student Writers and Experienced Adult Writers," *CCC*, 31 (1980), 378-80.

[9] To help students evaluate their personal narratives, I use a revised version of the "Personal Narrative Writing Scales" in Charles R. Cooper, "Holistic Evaluation of Writing," *Evaluating Writing*, ed. Cooper and Lee Odell (Urbana: NCTE, 1977). For self- and peer-evaluation instruments see, in the same volume, Mary H. Beaven, "Individualized Goal Setting, Self-Evaluation, and Peer Evaluation," pp. 135-56.

[10] Good discussions of the effectiveness of sentence combining are Frank O'Hare, *Sentence Combining: Improving Student Writing Without Formal Grammar Instruction* (Urbana: NCTE, 1971); and Andrew Kerek, Donald A. Daiker, and Max Morenberg, "The Effects of Intensive Sentence Combining on the Writing Ability of College Freshmen," *Language and Style*, 13 (1980), 81-90. ■

AUTHOR'S QUERY

For a study of the chronicles of Civil War Chaplains, both North and South, I would appreciate hearing from anyone (including libraries and owners of personal Civil War collections) who has chronicles, letters, journals and/or newspaper articles by Civil War Chaplains from both sides.

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Stephen North

Toward System in a Student-Centered Curriculum

FIVE YEARS AGO I wrote an essay that eventually appeared in *CCC* ("Composition Now: Standing on One's Head," *CCC* Vol. XXIX, No. 2, May 1978). I wrote it fresh from my doctoral examinations in 'Theories and Practice in Composition' in order to make sense of the apparent chaos of the composition field. My solution was capsulized in the metaphor of my title: by standing on my head and seeing the world as my students saw it, I would be able to find applications for the great variety of pedagogies available for teaching writing.

Both at the time and since, my support for this eclecticism in teaching writing has come under some fire. I have been gently chided, in private, that with a little more experience I would come to rely on two or three favorite approaches. In public, Douglas Park ("Theories and Expectations: On Conceiving Composition and Rhetoric as a Discipline *College English*, Vol. 41, No. 1, Sept. 1979) has dismissed my solution as "a dutifully upbeat conclusion" that belies the "frustration and insecurity" he perceives as remaining unresolved.

Such advice is taken in the spirit in which it is offered, and I recognize its practicality. Bringing theory to bear on practice—especially when the theory is as variegated as that which informs the teaching of writing—is always hard work. and it is easier to land on an approach or two and announce the decision to students: "This is how writing is learned in my course; take it or leave it."

Nevertheless, I have made considerable progress toward this goal of becoming the ultimately flexible writing teacher, toward bringing system and order to a student-centered curriculum. Most of what I have learned has grown out of work in tutorial instruction,[1] but it has served as the basis for a number of writing courses, and has implications for the entire writing curriculum that I shall explain later in this essay.

Two terms need to be defined. The first is, perhaps, a dissertation-ism, and its usefulness may not extend beyond this discussion: *meta-pedagogy*. Meta-pedagogy dignifies eclecticism in the teaching of writing with a name and a definition: It is a universe of instruction that includes an ever-growing understanding of the student as a writer and an equally endless, though slower growing, set of teaching strategies, held together by a set of principles for joining the two based on a collective teaching experience and instinct.

The second term, *composing profile*, is less global and takes a good deal more space to explain. The basic function of a composing profile is to provide a framework—a heuristic, if you will—for generating the most important of the three components of the meta-pedagogy, the understanding of the student as a writer. That is, in order for the meta-pedagogy to work, it is of primary importance that there be as full and as clear an understanding of the writer as possible, and that this understanding be in terms that can connect with the other two components. Otherwise, a catalogue of approaches, no matter how extensive, cannot be usefully brought to bear on a student's needs.

Before the composing profile is presented in some detail, it is necessary I point out that the other two components of the meta-pedagogy will not be as fully explained. Most readers will already have their own 'catalogue' of pedagogical approaches: free-writing, sentence combining, tagmemics, generative sentence work, topics, editing charts, and so on. There is no need for such a list here. Second, the principles that guide the connection of pedagogy to student need are implicit in the form of the composing profile itself and in the model of the composing process that informs it. Some connections are obvious, a few samples will be offered[2]; but the composing profile, like any other heuristic, is not algorithmic. It depends on the experience and creativity of its user. As a diagnostic tool, then, it is not a simple checklist that makes one-to-one correspondences between a student writer and a pedagogy, but a set of repeatable steps that make the search for possible correspondences more systematic.

The Composing Profile

The main function of the composing profile, as suggested above, is to provide a framework upon which a teacher and a student together can construct a conceptual portrait of the student as a writer. It is founded on this simple premise: in order for students to make changes in the writing they produce, they must make changes in the way they *do* writing—that is, they must alter their composing process. The first step toward making such changes is for the student to articulate his/her own understanding of this process. As far as is possible, the composing profile is assembled with the student's help and in the student's own terms. Changes in writing behavior are best made by an active learner taking conscious steps.

The profile, with sample questions, will be presented here as it has been used with college students; hence the emphasis on the student's history with and attitudes toward writing. If, as I will argue later, students begin a composing profile as soon as they begin writing in school, these retrospective sections would be modified.

Part I of the profile addresses concerns that are not immediate parts of the composing process, but that relate directly to it for most students. The four main headings—Prerequisite Skills, History, Attitude, Study Skills—are sufficient-

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ly explained by the questions listed under each.

Part II is not so straightforward. Called a composing chart, it is a tool for making connections between a student's written products and the process that produced them. Basically, it juxtaposes a traditional model for reader response and a version of our developing model of the composing process. The reader response chart in the left-hand column is nothing new. Its four main headings—Rhetorical, Syntactic, Lexical, and Mechanical—suggest the elements of texts over which a writer successfully or unsuccessfully exercises control, and so either keeps or loses readers. A fifth set of 'options,' devices for achieving coherence, is not made separate on this chart, but included under other headings. (For example: "Is there coherence within sentences?")

The headings across the top of the chart represent a non-linear model of the composing process.[3] That is, the headings do not suggest a composing chronology or hierarchy, but components of writing behavior that are pedagogically reachable. Each of these process headings deserves brief explanation.

Conception of Writing: This refers to a writer's understanding of the nature of the writing act. Mainly it concerns the rhetorical context in which writing takes place—purpose, audience, voice—but other considerations as well: Notions about what 'good' writing is, about the form of the writing process in successful writers, about the forms that kinds of discourse take and what the 'rules' are for generating them, and so on. Misconceptions about any of these can cripple or entirely block writing, and it is unlikely that successful teaching can begin until such misconceptions are removed.

Invention: This refers to the ways in which a writer generates material. It is split into before and during writing, because there are pedagogically—and probably psychologically— significant differences between the rather global, non-syntactic kinds of planning that go on before writing, and the word-to-word, clause-to-clause, sentence-to-sentence movement of composing that is itself a process of discovery. This is not to suggest that these kinds of thinking are sequential. There is surely a constant interplay between these two 'kinds' of invention, the absence of which may be a key element in the difficulties of certain writers. For teaching purposes, however, it is useful to distinguish between them.

Writing: This heading covers the activity of writing under three subheadings—clearly an arbitrary decision, but as far as current research will go. These parts of the writing process seem most crucial, yet most difficult to address in any direct way. More than with any other component of the composing process, our traditional pedagogies fail us here.

Fluency: This refers to a writer's ability to exercise the meaning-making options of English. We usually refer rather broadly to syntactic fluency—subordination, coordination, embedding, and so on—but other features are involved: fluency with the types of punctuation, fluency with formulaic constructions two or three sentences long, or even what might be called semantic fluency (rather different from diction), wherein a writer is aware of and able to use the relationships among key words in a text.

Recursive Reading: This describes the activity by which writers read what they have written in order to determine how they can proceed. It enables writers to engage in what Sondra Perl calls retrospective and projective structuring, composing behaviors in which writers alternately work to shape meaning for themselves (retrospective) and for their readers (projective). Writers who make too few or too many forays into what they've already written increase the chances that their web of meaning will unravel.

Editizing: This term and the one to follow—Revision—refer to different 'phases' of the same process: making

Composing Profile

Prerequisite Skills:

(Determined by observation): Can the student hold a pencil? Can he write quickly enough—in either printing or cursive—to sustain his flow of meaning? Can he read what he has written? Can he hear well enough to get directions? Can he copy from the board?

History:

How long have you been writing? Do you remember how you got started? Who was the most influential person—for better or worse—in your writing development? What was the best thing that ever happened to you as a writer? The worst? How have you changed (grown) as a writer as you've gotten older?

Attitudes:

How do you feel about writing? Do you like writing in an academic setting? How do you feel about handing writing in to be graded? How do you feel about reading it aloud or sharing it with your classmates? What is your favorite part of writing? Least favorite? Which part of writing is the easiest for you? Hardest? Do you think people are interested in what you write?

Study Skills:

Following Instructions: (Specific paper): What was the assignment here? Did the instructor give written instructions? Do you have those?

(General questions): What do you usually look for in assignments? Are you ever troubled by assignments? Where do you go for help when you need an explanation? Have you ever lost credit on a writing assignment or essay exam because you misunderstood the assignment?

Self Management: (Specific): When did you write this? Under what circumstances? Were there distractions (TV, stereo)? How long did it take you? Were you interrupted? Did you interrupt yourself? For what?

(General): When do you usually write? Do you have a place or time you use often? How long do writing assignments usually take? What percentage of your total study time is given to writing?

Understanding and Accepting Teachers' Criticism:

(Specific): What do you think the instructor found objectionable about this essay? What do you make of this comment here? Do you think you've gotten a fair grade?

(General): What do you find is the most frequent criticism of your work? How do you feel about that? What kind of praise do you most often get? What kind would you like to get more of?

COMPOSING CHART

Aim of Discourse: ___ Expressive ___ Referential ___ Literary ___ Persuasive

	YES	NO	CONCEPTION OF WRITING	INVENTION: Before	INVENTION: During	WRITING: Fluency	WRITING: Recursive Reading	WRITING: Editing	REVISION
RHETORICAL									
Is there: A clear sense of purpose?									
A clear sense of voice?									
A clear sense of audience?									
Are these consistent with each other?									
Is there enough material?									
Arranged according to some pattern?									
Is there a clear direction of development?									
Are there clear connections between paragraphs?									
Is there control over levels of abstraction?									
SYNTACTIC									
Do the sentences work?									
Incomplete?									
Too short?									
Too long?									
Are they varied in length?									
In pattern?									
Is there coherence within sentences?									
Between sentences?									
LEXICAL									
Are word choices appropriate?									
Inflated?									
Spare?									
Confused?									
MECHANICAL									
Are basic manuscript conventions followed (margins, paragraphing, title, etc.)?									
Does the writer have command of end punctuation?									
Commas?									
Medial punctuation other than commas (colons, dashes, semicolons)?									
Is there subject-verb agreement?									
Pronoun-antecedent agreement?									
Does the writer have command of standard usage?									

changes in a text, from minor editing to major alterations, intended to clarify the text for either the reader or the writer. Editizing is a term coined by Sondra Perl:

> Editizing may occur at any time after writing has begun. It involves examining and refining the words... on the page and includes editing to clarify meaning as well as proofreading to correct mechanical errors.

I have kept the term, but made it less comprehensive. In the composing chart, editizing refers to changes made in the text during composing, before the point at which the writer thinks of that text as finished. Changes after this point—which though elusive is almost certainly definable—come under Revision.

Revision: The grounds for this fairly serious distinction (and it would be most interesting to test it empirically) are, as under Invention above, pedagogical and psychological. Experience in both writing and teaching suggests that the mental shifts needed for making changes during and after the 'heat' of initial composing are different. Most writers become progressively more comfortable with their texts. Furthermore, the poorer the writer, the greater this attachment to the text will be, and the greater the effort required for change. For instructional purposes, then, it is important to help writers distinguish between the mental sets necessary for these two 'phases,' so that both have a place in the composing process.

Using the chart is not difficult. A reader would take one or more pieces of a student's writing, read through them, and then begin to fill out the chart. The exact sequence of this 'investigation' depends on a number of factors: student's age and intellectual level, cultural and educational background, writing past and habits, and so on. And it need not always start from scratch, as it so often must in writing centers; in a writing class, for example, much old ground can be covered in the first two or three meetings. In any setting, the object is to blend the students' perceptions of their own composing with the teacher's analysis of the texts and observations of the process in order to establish a model of the process—especially the breakdown—that can be addressed by some specific pedagogy.

Teaching experience and practice using the profile combine to suggest pedagogies for each process difficulty: sentence combining for *Fluency*, persona games under *Conception of Writing*, the pentad or freewriting under *Invention*, etc. New approaches are encouraged as well. One finds a need, for example, to devise ways to get students to read recursively, to interrupt their composing and self-consciously determine what they have said and what they plan to say. The point is this: We need to help our students move from the problems readers have with their texts to changes in the way they generate those texts. This is what the composing profile does.

Implications

The composing profile has its most obvious uses in writing centers, where individual instruction is the norm. However, there is no reason to restrict its use in that way. I have used it as the basis for college writing courses with students at very different levels of writing ability. During the first five weeks of such courses, students are made highly conscious about their own and others' writing habits in the framework of the profile. Papers on "How I Write" and "My History as a Writer" are written and exchanged.[4] Students are taught to focus on the decisions they make as writers—how, for example, they define an audience, and how this defining works into their invention schemes, or how their habitual syntactic choices control the shape and direction of larger units of discourse. This consciousness-raising culminates in a conference in which we determine just which part of their composing behavior they can realistically hope to alter during that semester. There is usually considerable range, from learning how to write faster to mastering some formal heuristic to not writing during the commercials of football games. These aims are not contrived or intrusive. As a class we still write together, share essays, focus on rhetorical and stylistic issues. But in subsequent writing, in my responses, and in conferences, students concentrate especially on altering their composing behavior in the assigned way.

It has become clear, however, that isolated use of the meta-pedagogy and the composing profile is not enough. Students have seen nothing like it before they get into my class, and are unlikely to see it again. Indeed, probably the most serious problem our students face in learning to write is that writing, when it is taught, is taught in conflicting or not easily related ways. At its worst, this inconsistency finds each teacher approaching writing with an idiosyncratic blend of tradition, superstition, and prejudice. Students are left with sets of 'Nevers' and 'Always': "Always state your thesis before you begin to write"; "Always outline"; "Never begin a sentence with 'but'." They are also certain that writing is a mysterious art permanently tied to the personality of their most recent or influential teacher.

This particular version of the situation is probably getting rarer, but all of our attention to the writing curriculum is not likely to ease the general problem of curricular inconsistency very soon. Teacher #1 will favor TRIQAPS, teacher #2 freewriting and revising, teacher #3 tagmemics. The politics of education are such that each teacher feels almost a desperate need to reach closure on writing in the 15 or 30 or 45 weeks allotted; each course may be, as one so often hears, the last chance any particular group of students will have to *really* learn writing. So while individual approaches may be gaining in integrity, the basic problem—the absence of a sense of development for the students—remains.

The proper response to this problem is not to dictate a single model curriculum for K-16 and beyond, but to *systematize* the student-centered curriculum. What students should carry with them from writing class to writing class should not be grades, SAT scores, or *the* rules of writing, but a portfolio and a composing profile.

This means of documenting our students' progress ought to have a terrific impact on the structure of our writing programs. It would demand three things from teachers: careful attention to students as individual writers, a healthy perspective on both the teacher's and the student's location in the instructional continuum, and a studied awareness of the writing process. It would *not* shackle them to any single text or particular approach (although some modifications of their usual methods might be in order): teacher #1 could still use TRIQAPS, teacher #2 freewriting and revision, teacher #3 tagmemics, but in the context of the composing process and with deference to individual needs and idiosyncracies.

Two points remain to be made. First, I must stress again that the composing profile is generated as far as possible *in* the student's terms *for* the student. Using it as a teacher-only diagnostic tool defeats its

ultimate aim of keeping the student as a conscious learner at the center of the curriculum.

Second, the meta-pedagogy and composing profile are advanced in response to certain trends in our emerging discipline. Some of the professional literature and much convention talk suggests that we are working toward a neatly defined, publicly defendable curriculum in writing based on empirical data gathered through a number of research methodologies. 'Back to basics' in this sense has a different meaning: we aim to arrive, by more scientific inquiry than we have used before, at the essence of the writing act, and reshape our teaching practices accordingly. In short, we are fostering the illusion that we can develop a predictable one-to-one correspondence between students' needs and pedagogical practices.

Such hopes are both mistaken and inhumane, and rest upon a misunderstanding of the potential uses of the wonderful variety of perspectives on writing offered by other disciplines. The misunderstanding can be explained this way: we think that by assembling a variety of perspectives on the process of writing we can create a single, unified perspective—a paradigm, in Kuhn's parlance—by which to operate. That is, we hope to make the dynamic instructional universe defined in the meta-pedagogy stable and neat: our understanding of the student as writer will connect with a limited set of pedagogies via principles clearly articulated and empirically tested.

The problem is that such a 'stable' universe of instruction, though utilitarian and efficient, is sterile—no better, in fact, than the long-lived prescriptivism we are trying so hard to leave behind. Teaching and learning writing cannot be made arithmetic. No accounting of 'relevant' variables could ever offer anything like a safe paradigm. The desire for intellectual closure, for the security of an 18th century version of our discipline, is understandable, but not excusable. We *need* research—empirical and other—because it informs all of what we do. And we need to maintain our sense of history in order to avoid the re-invention syndrome that has been our trademark. But we cannot afford to be reductive. A writing teacher has to learn to live with the constantly shifting boundaries that go with a 20th century discipline.

Our only real choice is to work toward order and system in a student-centered curriculum that keeps track of itself, that gathers and sorts students and pedagogies in ways and for reasons we can repeat. The meta-pedagogy and the composing profile offer a sound basis upon which to build such a curriculum.

Notes

[1]See my dissertation (unpublished), *Writing Centers: A Sourcebook*, SUNY at Albany, 1979.

[2]For a more detailed list, see my dissertation, Ch. III, pp. 120-150.

[3]I must acknowledge my debt here to Sondra Perl's *Five Writers Writing: Case Studies of the Composing Processes of Unskilled Writers*. Unpublished dissertation, NYU, 1978. Further references to her work will be given parenthetically in the text.

[4]Based on a suggestion from Robert Gundlach in Charles Cooper's "Teaching Writing by Conferencing" in *Survival Through Language: The Basics and Beyond*, Proceedings of the 29th Language Communications Conference, University of Pittsburgh, 1977, pp. 7-22. ■

SPECIAL ASSEMBLY FOR HANDICAPPED FORMED IN NCTE

This is to announce the formation of a Special Assembly of the NCTE to address issues of concern for handicapped teachers of English and for teachers of English to the handicapped. The goal of the Special Assembly is to increase the awareness not only within the profession but without of the special needs and contributions of handicapped teachers and of the particular requirements of teachers of English to handicapped children.

The Special Assembly invites the participation of deaf, blind, or orthopedically handicapped teachers of English or those teachers of English who serve such populations.

The Special Assembly will have an organizational meeting at the Boston Convention on Saturday, November 21 between 5 and 6. Individuals interested in the Special Assembly may contact Tom Kluwin, MSSD, #113, Gallaudet College, Washington, DC 20002.

Call for Manuscripts

The editors of *Focus: Teaching English Language Arts* are preparing a special issue on Global Education for Winter, 1982. We are soliciting articles from prominent members of the profession and the world community.

The articles should be from 4-10 typewritten pages (double-spaced) and could be about any facet of English instruction at any level related to Global Studies. We hope you will take this opportunity to contribute your views.

Possible Topics and Questions:

1. The impact of the media on students' perceptions of global issues.
2. Integrating facts that cultivate sensitivity and empathy toward a foreign culture.
3. Administrative, organizational, and political changes for global awareness in teacher education.
4. The importance of foreign language in creating global awareness.
5. Integrating global studies into the existing curriculum.
6. Social studies and English-language arts teachers: partners in global education.

The list above is meant to be suggestive, not exhaustive. The deadline for manuscript submission is Nov. 1, 1981; press date December 1, 1981.

College Learning Skills Association Meeting in November

"Learning Skills across the Curriculum" is the theme of the fall conference of the College Learning Skills Association. The conference will be held at Grossinger's Nov. 1-4, 1981.

The program will include presentations, workships, and special guest speakers covering a broad variety of concerns such as reading, writing, math skills, instructional strategies, special programs for ESL and EOP, learning disabled, handicapped, nontraditional and returning students.

For more information contact Gladdys W. Church, Director of Learning Skills, SUC/Brockport, Brockport, NY 14420.

Thomas Newkirk

It's Dirty to Keep Yelling Digression

NEAR THE END of *Catcher in the Rye*, Holden Caulfield is in the apartment of his former English teacher, Mr. Antolini. Holden complains to Antolini about an oral expression course in which students shouted "digression" whenever any speaker went off the subject. Holden's comments can be also viewed as a general criticism of any teaching practice which doesn't respect discovery:

> ...There was this one boy, Richard Kinsella. He didn't stick to the point too much, and they were always yelling 'Digression!' at him. ...He got a D plus because they kept yelling 'Digression!' at him all the time. For instance, he made this speech about this farm his father bought in Vermont. They kept yelling 'Digression!' at him the whole time he was making it, and this teacher, Mr. Vinson, gave him an F on it because he hadn't told what kind of animals and vegetables and stuff grew on the farm and all. What he did was, Richard Kinsella, he'd *start* telling you all about that stuff—then all of a sudden he'd start telling you about this letter his mother got from his uncle, and how his uncle got polio and all when he was forty-two years old, and how he wouldn't let anybody come to see him in the hospital because he didn't want anybody to see him with a brace on. It didn't have much to do with the farm—I admit it—but it was *nice*. ...I mean it's dirty to keep yelling 'Digression' at him when he's all nice and excited.

I begin with Holden because he (or J. D. Salinger) clarifies the difference between using language to present a finished thought (what Mr. Vinson wanted) and using language to explore thought (what Richard Kinsella did). This distinction is crucial not only for courses in oral expression, but for courses in writing—especially for courses where students are expected to revise their work. The danger is to treat the language of exploration as if it were the language of presentation, or to use Linda Flower's terms, to treat "writer-based prose" as if it were "reader-based prose."

Flower is not the first to argue for the role of exploratory language, but her examination of writer-based prose is perhaps the most precise available and the most useful for the classroom teacher. I will briefly summarize the function and features of writer-based prose and then show how the writing teacher might profitably use this information in responding to student papers.

Writer-based prose helps the writer deal with a complex of pressures. He or she must not only search memory or collected data for relevant material but must also prepare that material for a reader. Trying to locate, evaluate, elaborate, and present the material—*all in the act of writing one draft*—can overload the memory circuits of the inexperienced writer, who either becomes frustrated or attempts to only meet *some* of the demands on the first draft. In that case, the result is writer-based prose—writing to inventory, writing to discover.

It is also writing that may appear chaotic to the reader. Transitions will be missing. Pronoun references will be vague. Major concepts will not be developed. The information may be strung in a narrative that lacks a point or focus, just one thing after another.

The handbooks warn us about these sins and provide the appropriate correction marks. But they don't tell us why these errors occur or why they may be psychologically necessary. Flower does.

A number of the features of writer-based prose resemble the features of inner speech or verbal thought that were first described by Lev Vygotsky, the Russian psychologist.[1] Drawing on Vygotsky's work, Flower identifies three major characteristics.[2]

The first is the use of words that are "saturated with sense." Words are not used in the specific and limited public sense but in a private sense where the word contains "the sum of all the psychological events aroused by the word." For example, if I write, "Ashland, Ohio," you may think of a town in Ohio. A few of you may have passed the Ashland exit on Interstate 71. One or two of you may know that Ashland is famous (or, at least, we like to think it is) for making balloons. But the meaning you can draw from "Ashland, Ohio," is limited. I grew up in Ashland, Ohio, and for me those words are saturated with meaning—they contain images of football at the college, homecoming parades, afternoons pretending to work at the park. The name calls up Center Street where the town barons built their mansions, and, further out, the country club section where the descendents of the barons built their sprawling ranch houses. All of this and much more adheres to the words.

In student writing, this same saturation occurs. The student writes, "The view from Mount Washington was breathtaking," and no more. The words "Mount Washington" are saturated for the student in the same way that "Ashland, Ohio" is saturated for me. As the student revises, he or she must *wring the meaning from the word*, reduce the word itself to the public meaning, make those psychological events connected with the word explicit.

The second characteristic of writer-based prose is ambiguous or absent pronoun reference. Most adults know that pronouns should have clear referents but none of us consistently provides them. We often fail to provide them when we are

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"thinking out loud." For example, it is the end of a long day. I'm sitting in the kitchen and my wife is dutifully listening to me sort out my day.

"She was late again." I say.

"Who was?" asks my wife.

"Debbie Baxter," I answer.

"Who's Debbie Baxter?" she asks.

"A student."

"Graduate student or freshman?"

"Graduate student."

According to Vygotsky, inner speech is largely predicative, because the predicate often carries the new information while the subject often provides older, understood, information. The new information in the talk with my wife was the predicate—"She *was late.*" In my state of self-absorption, the information about the "she," the fact that she was a graduate student named Debbie Baxter, seemed unnecessary.

The third, and most important feature of writer-based prose, is the narrative form. The narrative helps the writer to recover information. Suppose, for example, you were asked to tell someone the layout of your home or apartment. Chances are you would not draw a map, you would describe a tour through your house. Flower cites a study conducted by Linde and Labov[3], in which 97% of those asked to tell the layout of their house responded by describing a tour. The tour is a kind of narrative—an account of movement through the house—and it helps us to think about and recover the relevant information about the layout of the house.

Many of these traits can be seen in the following piece, written by an eleventh grader:

My Life

In this composition I intend to write about myself, my life from as young as I can remember until now. When I was about six until the time that I was nine I use to go to school and play baseball, and that's just about all I did.

I was born in Niagra Falls New York, and I lived there until I was nine. All of my relatives live there, except my mother's parents who moved to Farmington about three years after we moved here. When I was real young one of the kids that I use to play ball with, was hit by a car and killed, that was terrible. He was a good kid and a really good baseball player. I don't remember much about when I was really little except maybe, Christmas and Easter.

When I was nine years old my family moved to New Hampshire, because the company that my father worked for moved here. I didn't want to move. I figured I would miss all of my friends. I did for a while but I got over it and now the friends that I have are really great. I started school here in the 4th grade. My parents introduced me to my teacher as "James" which I'm not so crazy about, and for that whole year I was known as James but in 5th grade I got that all straightened out. I remember in 5th grade it was a really easy good off year. The teacher was really simple. But sixth grade wasn't the same, my sixth grade teacher was tough. We worked hard in that class. But it payed off it always does. The last week in the summer between 6th and 7th grade I was sort of upset about going to school. Because it would be different. I've never liked new or different things I'm very aprensive about them. I didn't do very well academically when I was in 7th grade. But 8th grade was different, I do really good. I think alot of it was because I liked my teacher's alot. When I like my teacher's I seem to do well in school.

Towards the end of my 8th grade year I got mono. At first I was just tired but I started feeling really rotten I got swollen glands, unbelievable and a sore throat, I wasn't hungry at all. All I wanted to do was to just sleep I was totally miserable. One night I spit up some blood. And my mother called the doctor and told him. He said that if I did it again that she should bring me in. The next night I spit up some more blood so I had to go to the hopsital in Dover, that's were the doctor was after running some tests he said that I had to be admitted into the hospital so I stayed in the hospital that night. They put this stupid I.V. in my arm I couldn't stand it. I didn't sleep hardly at all threw the whole night. The next day I was suppose to have some x-rays taken after that was done my doctor told me that I had to go to Boston Children's hospital because they couldn't figure out how to stop the bleeding or where it was coming from so in about an hour an ambulance came and the ambulance put me in the ambulance and everybody cleared out of the way for me. That was great. Although the reason that I was going wasn't to wonderful. I ended up spending a whole week in which for three day's I couldn't eat or drink and that stunk because eating is my favorite pastime. During this whole ordeal. I lost 26 pounds my clothes didn't fit properly. I got an awful lot of get well cards while I was sick and that certainly helped to make me feel better knowing that people care always makes rough times either. Because of mono I had an inlarged spleen and because of that I had to miss three weeks of the baseball season. I was very mad that I had to miss so much but there wasn't nothing that I could do about it. So that's my mono story.

My freshman year, was extremely dull. I made the freshman basketball team. And our record was 16-1. I think we were the best freshman team in Spaulding's history other than that my freshmen year stunk. My grade in french and algebra proved it. I just didn't understand. nothing exceptionally good happened my sophomore year. In October my grandfather died. But that was terrible. My grades were good. I think they were better last year than anyother. I made the J.V. Basketball Team and I was proud of that. I started the first 13 games. Last summer I made the American legion team and now i'm a Junior in High School just 2 more year's and I graduate it's hard to believe but it's true. Time sure does fly when your having fun.

The most obvious writer-based prose trait is the narrative structure that is more an inventory than a shaped account of an experience. The writer, in the first sentence, indicates that he is trying to *remember* what has happened to him and the narrative structure is clearly helping him do that. Also prominent are saturated words or expressions that seem to hold a great deal of experience and feeling.

One possible saturated word is "terrible" which is used twice, once in connection with the death of his friend and the other time in connection with the death of his grandfather. It may be that the writer is invoking a piety—all death is terrible. And it is possible that he may not want to expand on the experiences which is, of course, his right. But I feel that a teacher could ask, without being insensitive, "Could you say anything more about what made these experiences terrible?"

A second saturated expression seems to occur at the end of the third paragraph. "When I like my teachers I seem to do well in school." There is a history of dealing with teachers embedded in this sentence. Here the teacher might ask, "Think of a teacher that you liked. What did that person do to help you do good work? Tell me exactly what that person said and did to help you."

A third saturated expression may be related to the comment about school. Near the end of the third paragraph he writes, "I've never liked new or different things. I'm very apprehensive about them." Again, there is a history of adjustment contained in the sentence. The teacher's question could be, "What make you apprehensive about new situations? Can you think of the time when you were most apprehensive? Tell me as much as you can remember about it. What have people done to make you less apprehensive in these situations?"

There are other characteristics, not mentioned by Flower, that are common in writer-based prose and that appear in this piece. The listing gives way to a story in the fourth paragraph. This kind of shift happens frequently in conversation, when we talk on the phone for example. My brother calls and asks me what I'm doing. I begin to list things—trips, illnesses in the family, books read, until, after a minute or two something catches; I'm reminded of an incident, a joke, a conversation—inventory becomes real narrative. It is this kind of shift that Holden describes in the speeches of Richard Kinsella. The shift also occurs in "My Life." The inventory goes on for three paragraphs until the writer comes to his "mono story," which is more of a true narrative. After the mono story, he goes back to his inventory. The writer might be encouraged to revise focusing solely on his "mono story."

There also seems to be an aversion to using the period in writer-based prose. Readers need the period, but I'm not sure writers do, especially when they are discovering material. The writer's impulse, his need, is to move forward and the period makes him stop. The aversion to using periods is most evident when the writer of "My Life" takes off on his "mono story." In the 820 word piece there are 16 clear errors where the writer has failed to punctuate sentences or has separated sentences with a comma to form a comma splice. Nine of these errors occur in the 336 word "mono story" segment; the "mono story" has one error/37 words as compared to one error/68 words for the rest of the piece. Sentences run on more in the "mono story." In this section sentences average 20 words as compared to 12 words average for the rest of the piece.

Why the difference? It helps to read the "mono story" section aloud as I did at a conference. The effort left me breathless. The writer seems to sense he's on to something, but if he stops that "something" will vanish. The period, signifying as it does completion, may not only be useless for the writer; it may be an impediment.

No one is suggesting that writer-based prose is an end in itself. The aim of writing, ultimatly, must be to share meaning, and writer-based prose does not do that well. One of the education implications of Flower's work, however, is to help teachers recognize that writer-based prose may be a necessary intermediate step, a half-way house, between the thoughts, perceptions, memories that the writer brings to the paper and prose that can be truly appreciated by a reader.

Flower reminds us that many of the flaws in first draft writing are the flaws of discovery. They are flaws that exhibit a mind at work—remembering, pushing against and beyond sentence barriers, laying bare loaded expressions that are really undetonated generalizations. They are flaws that on subsequent drafts must be remedied. But during the discovery process they must be tolerated, even encouraged. Otherwise we are blaming the seed for not being a plant.

Notes

[1]Lev Vygotsky, *Thought and Language* (Cambridge: MIT Press and Wiley, 1962).

[2]Linda Flower, "Writer based Prose: A Cognitive Basis for Problems in Writing," *College English*, 41:1 (September, 1979), pp. 19-38.

[3]Charlotte Linde and William Labov, "Spatial Networks as a Site for the Study of Language and Thought," *Language*, 51 (1975), 924-939. ■

Perfection Reflection

"Given that nothing human is perfect, what do you see as the possible weaknesses or flaws in your plan?"

"That's true, of course, but the plan we have presented is as foolproof as humanly possible, and I don't see any flaws in it."

Remarks at a Faculty Meeting

The fly rests on the surface,
Viewing the surrounding perfection—
Translucent, flower-scented, faintly opalescent—
A most satisfying ointment.
With similar satisfaction the spanner notes
That, unlike its neighbor cams
In the well-geared clockwork,
It is blessed with a handle
Capable of knocking the teeth out of
Any gear.
Well satisfied and at peace,
The crack surveys the unbroken perfection
Of the dyke
Stretching as a bulwark
Against the ocean's fury
On either side.

C. M. Lynch
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Judith A. Horowitz

Reducing Writing Anxiety in a Cross-Cultural Educational Experience

AS CULTURAL DIVERSITY INCREASES in schools and universities throughout the United States, English teachers can expect the teaching of writing to become more difficult. Approximately four million students in our schools currently speak little or no English. Many of these students were born in this country, many others abroad. As immigration continues, that number will rise. Another ten million or so students, usually from homes where English is not the principal language, speak limited English. [1] Almost 300,000 foreign students are enrolled in American institutions of higher education, and that figure is growing at a rate of over ten per cent each year. [2] The influx of students with limited proficiency in English has important implications for the teacher of English.

Students with little or no English usually receive their initial English language training in special classes. As they gain a basic command of English, they tend to move on to regular classrooms. The assumption of most teachers is that these students are now ready to function fully in English. What many teachers do not realize is that even students who have a basic command of English and sound proficient are not necessarily ready to write in it.

Learning to write in English is a special problem for culturally differentiated students. Culture has a prominent bearing on habits of thought, and writing simply cannot be separated from thinking. Since much writing is "a matter of helping students learn to see abstract structures," [3] it is not surprising that students new to a language should have trouble manipulating it. To the considerable extent that writing involves reasoning, not everyone reasons in the same way. Americans frequently reason by example; deduction is more important in some other cultures. For students already well along in schooling in their home countries, adapting to an entirely new educational system is especially difficult. During the writing process, students must adjust not only to new ways of thinking but also to new, often strange teaching methods, new grading standards, and often a qualitatively different kind of relationship between student and teacher. The impact of reasoning and teaching styles, and of the school environment in general, on writing progress should not be underestimated.

Neither should differences among foreign students. An important but often overlooked fact is that foreign students arrive at school in this country with widely varying levels of literacy in their first language. Those who immigrate in early childhood or who come from deprived backgrounds may not be at all literate in their home language; others, with more schooling behind them, come with considerable experience in reading and writing, albeit not in English. Despite these differences, students tend to receive uniform instruction in their initial English classes, and this lack of differentiation often continues throughout school. Yet those who have had more practice in writing in their first language may be able to transfer some of it to learning how to write English. In short, the linguistic and prior educational background of culturally differentiated students is bound to have a continuing impact on their ability to gain writing facility. Such students may differ among themselves in ways relevant to the teaching of writing.

Cultural differentiation can also affect the motivation of students. Some foreign students are exceptionally motivated to learn everything; others are not. A student may resent being transplanted abruptly to a new country, where he must function in a strange language; his pride may be hurt when he receives an initial spate of poor grades; or he may be subject to parental pressure to preserve the family's cultural identity. These are among the many possible disincentives to achieving high levels of proficiency in writing. English teachers need to be sensitive to all the potential sources of writing difficulty.

The problems, of course, vary with the age of the student. Younger students may be more malleable but initially perhaps more resistant to transplantation. Students who come to the United States as adults may be highly motivated to learn written English for career purposes but may be less culturally adaptable. Even people from countries where English is frequently spoken often have difficulty writing in English.

An interesting set of writing problems was presented during the African Educators Program. [4] The problems were experienced by adults who, with few exceptions, came to the United States from countries where English was the language of the schools and often of official business. The program brought educators to this country for two months to gain an overview of the American educational system and to increase their repertoire of administrative skills. The program participants observed schools, attended seminars and workshops, and took part in a one week internship working closely with a professional counterpart in a school or educational office. These activities were accompanied by a small number of writing assignments. While the teaching of writing was not a primary focus of the program, writing certainly was an essential ingredient of this cross-cultural educational experience. The participants were therefore asked to keep a journal, prepare lists of questions and discussion topics, and produce a short paper on educational issues in their home countries.

Of all the educational activities in the program, the only ones that presented

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substantial pedagogical problems were those that required writing skills. Although confined to a particular group of adults, the writing difficulties they had and the approaches that were used to deal with those difficulties illustrate some general themes in the teaching of writing to culturally differentiated students.

The Participants and Their Symptoms

The professional and educational attainments of the participants suggested a high level of proficiency in English. As indicated, nearly all the participants came from Anglophone countries.[5] All were secondary school administrators, teacher trainers, or education ministry employees with supervisory positions. All had attended and most had graduated from universities or colleges where English is the medium of instruction and examination.

The participants generally showed a high degree of adaptability to each other and to the program. During group discussions, they felt comfortable sharing all kinds of experiences, even some of a quite personal nature. This was undoubtedly facilitated by the fact that the participants were all women, all at somewhat parallel stages in their careers, since one purpose of the program is to develop a network of African women with mutual interests and in leadership positions. In addition, the program directors were also women who had recently added administrative responsibilities to their experience as teacher trainers.

The ways in which these able and amiable women at first expressed their anxiety about writing are familiar to any English teacher. From the time an assignment was given until its completion, the participants continued to ask questions about it—about its length, its purpose, its value, its audience. Assignments were not always completed on time, although the participants were notably punctual for all other scheduled activities throughout the program. Several of the papers were barely legible; others were faintly written. The participants did not volunteer to share their writing with the group. Once submitted to the directors, the papers were rarely mentioned again. And the product was sometimes disappointing. The papers often did not adequately express the views or reflect the experience of the women.

Sources of the Problem

It was not possible to elicit causes for writing anxiety from the women themselves. If asked about it, they ignored the question, had no reasons, or gave unrelated answers. The explanations advanced in this article are based on the participants' responses to subsequent changes in the writing activities and on observations made by the directors.[6]

Many of the participants were not as adept in writing in English as their applications for the program indicated they would be. Although English proficiency was a requirement for the program, no specific demonstration of written facility was required, apart from the application. As it turned out, formal credentials, such as college degrees and years of professional experience, and the cogent presentation of application materials were no proof of ability to write in English. This depended for the most part on whether the participants came from urban centers where English was commonly spoken, from homes where English was customarily used and where children often attended English medium schools, and from countries where English was traditionally introduced during the early school years. Competence in written English depended to a large extent on how much writing the participant's job at home required and whether it was done primarily in English. Before they went home, a few participants admitted that they had received considerable help with their applications because their writing skills were so rusty.

All the participants felt more comfortable speaking than writing in English. They usually spoke far more correctly than they could write. Even so, some of the participants were hesitant to do more than just listen during early days of the program. One woman acknowledged toward the end of her stay that having to communicate only in English was one of the most valuable functions of the program for her. Even at her English-medium high school in a rural area of Northern Nigeria, she used Hausa a great deal since many students had difficulty understanding English.[7] For her and a few other participants, just becoming fluent in English was a problem. Such participants were willing after a short time to risk making mistakes in word selection or sentence structure in conversation, but they remained far less willing to reveal their shortcomings in English through spelling or punctuation errors on paper.

The effects of differences between education in the British and the American traditions were apparent many time throughout the program. The confusion that can arise when people with different kinds of training interact was demonstrated most pointedly with the issues paper. In making the assignment, the directors anticipated that the participants would have no trouble formulating a thesis and proceeding independently to present a reasoned argument for it. Participants were expected to draw inferences and examples from what they heard in seminars, from what saw during school visits, and, of course, from their own experience as educators. No reading material was assigned specifically for the preparation of the paper. Contrary to the directors' expectations, the participants felt far more confident of their ability to recapitulate or respond to what they had read or heard in a lecture than to arrive at independent conclusions.

Differences among the participants themselves also help to account for their uneasiness in writing. In selecting educators for the program, an effort was made to form a group of women with similar accomplishments. Differences in age were not considered important, and differences in social status could not be determined from the applications. It became evident in discussions, nevertheless, that these differences did affect relationships among group members at times, and they most likely contributed to writing anxiety. As in many cultures, it is customary among most African groups to accord special status to older and more elite members. During discussions, some participants expected those members to speak first and took their cues from them. Set apart from the group in the seclusion of their own rooms, those participants would need to have taken the chance of writing something that higher status members might find disagreeable. Besides helping to explain the reluctance of some of the women to undertake writing assignments and later share them with the group, this deference to special members helps to account for the number of papers on

which several participants had obviously collaborated and to which more senior or elite members had evidently given approval.

For some of the participants, the incentives for writing may not have been sufficient. The program awards certificates, but it is not a degree program. While it is professionally advantageous to have participated in the program, it is not necessary or even possible to achieve any honors or grades. All the women could feel reasonably sure they would receive their certificates even if they devoted little attention to the writing exercises. For a few women, the opportunity to escape the tedious responsibilities of work and family for two months was enough to take from the program. For them, the writing was simply a chore to be fulfilled but with little enthusiasm or involvement.

Certainly the participants did not all share the same amount of writing anxiety or display the same symptoms. Those who came with the highest levels of English proficiency had the least difficulty writing. They also tended to be those whose positions at home made them more secure and at the same time left them feeling "burnt-out" from heavy responsibilities. During the course of the program, close personal ties developed among many group members. It became essential, therefore, to keep those with the greatest influence interested in the writing activities and to keep those with the most insecurity from demoralizing the others.

Remedial Steps

Evaluations by the staff and participants at the end of the 1978 African Educators Program pointed to a major writing problem in the program and a useful tool to ease writing anxiety. Everyone agreed that the issues paper produced far too much tension and that attention should be devoted to making its writing easier. The consensus was also that keeping a journal helped in reducing writing anxiety.

The use of a journal proved to be a very effective yet simple way to encourage writing. At the start of the program, the participants were given bound notebooks in which to preserve a permanent account of their stay, take notes, and record names of people with whom they wanted to stay in contact. The participants were not required to share the contents of the journals, but sometimes they did, especially toward the end of the program. When the women returned from the three-week tours that took them in pairs to different sections of the United States, it became clear that most of them had used their journals extensively to chronicle their travels. Several read lengthy accounts of their trip to the group.

The participants also used their journals to practice writing. On occasion, a participant would ask a director or another colleague to glance at a journal entry where she had been experimenting with a new or different way of expressing an idea. Some of these practice entries later found their way into formal written exercises. English was uniformly the language of the journals. Small groups of women would gather once in a while and speak Swahili, which several of them knew, but no one ever revealed writing in her journal in anything but English. The steady flow of written English helped even the most timid writer compose more easily by the end of the program.

"Talk was an important part of the writing process"

The issues paper was assigned for many reasons. One of the program objectives is to encourage the participants to identify obstacles to educational development, both in their own country and in others, and to look for possible solutions. The paper was seen as a vehicle to help in this process, by focusing the attention of participants on educational issues and educational change. As they prepared to write the paper, the participants were encouraged during the course of their visits to consider whether comparable problems existed in the United States. This linked the writing to their observations. The papers were also to form the basis of discussion, enabling the participants to learn more about each others' educational systems. And the papers were to be used by the directors in placing the participants in internships at institutions where administrators were seeking solutions to comparable problems. Since the participants knew that discussions and placement conferences would be held, they had reason to believe that the papers would have a receptive and interested audience. Finally, they were intended to be utilized by the women on their return home. All of them would be expected to submit written reports on the program to their education ministries. Just as it helped the participants to articulate their concerns and organize their observations in the United States, so, too, did the issues paper help them report on their experience later.

Like administrators anywhere, the participants were pragmatic and task-oriented. The knowledge that the issues paper would be useful helped to motivate them but did little to relieve anxiety over writing it. To reduce the anxiety so apparent in the 1978 program, the next year several writing sessions were held before the issues paper was begun. These were devoted to helping the participants focus on educational issues, frame questions, and gather and analyze informational material. The sessions proceeded modestly, by asking the participants to list educational issues in their home countries, by dividing them into small groups to discuss the issues, and by helping them to construct questions for their meetings with American school administrators. These short, manageable, highly-focused exercises asked little of the women early in the program, but helped them develop a more secure grasp of their issues and confidence that they would be prepared to write when the time came.

Talk was an important part of the writing process. Since most of the exercises demanded that the participants bring to bear skills and patterns of reasoning that were often unfamiliar to them, time set aside for informal talk before an assignment was started helped to clarify its objectives and ways of approaching them. Talking about it also generated enthusiasm for the topic. Small group discussions followed the completion of a written task. Some women found themselves listening seriously to women with whom they had previously only shared social concerns. In small groups, women who were hesitant to share what they had written were more willing to talk about a subject and occasionally to seek writing guidance. Those who might otherwise not have completed an assign-

ment were reluctant to come empty-handed to a group of only three or four colleagues, and so group discussion motivated the participants and sharpened thinking and writing skills.

Nothing has been said so far about the importance of using reading material to enhance writing. The 1978 participants resisted doing much reading for the program. When they were given material, they packed it away, promising to read it back home. In their spare time, they preferred to watch television. While this was understandable, especially for those not accustomed to widespread availability of TV, the absence of reading material cut the participants off from a whole dimension of cross-cultural awareness and from examples of good writing. It became a challenge to find material which the women would read and could benefit from.

Several carefully chosen pieces were given to the 1979 participants. Before leaving her home country, each woman was sent a compact book, replete with illuminating charts and diagrams, about American education. During the program, just before visiting a particular kind of classroom or attending a special seminar or cultural event, the participants were asked to read short background articles. Newspaper articles and editorials about educational issues, such as declining SAT scores, happened to be especially plentiful. Photocopies were distributed to the women and frequently served as springboards for discussion. Some of the participants borrowed books on professional subjects from the directors, and a few bought books on unfamiliar topics, like learning disabilities. The most popular reading, however, and the most discussed was the adolescent novel given to each participant at a seminar on secondary school English teaching. The women not only discussed plots and character development in these very readable novels; they remarked on dialogue, phrasing, and the use of imagery. It is not possible to assess the full impact of their reading on the participants' writing. It does seem likely, nevertheless, that the carefully timed distribution of carefully chosen reading material made the written word an important part of their experience in the program and also heightened their sensitivity to alternative ways of expressing ideas.

Strategies for Reducing Writing Problems

The writing problems revealed in the course of the African Educators Program and the methods used to meet them suggest the need for an approach that is at once individuated and integrated. By this I mean that it is necessary to pay close attention to the particular cultural and linguistic baggage carried by each student into the class and to avoid treating writing as just a technical skill isolated from other human skills and experiences.

Even in a group sharing many points of common background (education, occupation, sex), the sources of writing difficulty were by no means uniform. Although all but one had been to English-medium schools, some of the participants were accustomed to using English much more than others. Despite their superficially similar levels of fluency, their levels of practice in the language were very different. Some participants spoke English better than they wrote it; for others, the two skills were about the same. Some participants accorded more deference to older or higher status members of the group and so were more inhibited about expressing themselves independently. The various participants were interested in different aspects of the program, and their analytical capacity also varied. Some of these differences could be used constructively in the writing process—for example, when small groups were formed according to common interests. Attention to individual differences, even when students have shared characteristics that make them appear similar, is an indispensable part of an effective writing program for culturally differentiated classes.

Individuated at the student level, a writing program needs to be integrated at the activity level. The journal illustrates this well. Journals are a frequently employed means of inducing reluctant, embarrassed, or ungrammatical writers to begin expressing themselves on paper. The journal would not, however, have been as successful as it was in the African Educators Program had it not done triple duty as a memo pad for school observations, a travel diary, and a repository of notes for the report to be rendered back home. It proved to be, in short, a kind of written crossroads for the whole experience. Precisely because the journal integrated disparate and often pleasant experiences, it reduced anxieties about more focused and serious written assignments.

The same can be said for the integration of writing with reading, talking, and thinking. The content of the program made it necessary to perform all of these activities in close proximity to each other. Consequently, the artificial separation of writing from analysis, the written word from the spoken word, the writer from the reader, was to some extent mitigated. It is not easy to reduce that separation, but it certainly helps to produce writing that is less strained. English classes that emphasize regular and frequent writing as the key to writing success are based on the truism that a person who does not write cannot learn to write. But neither can a person who does not read, think, or express himself orally.

Notes

[1]Stanley Levenson, "Teaching Reading and Writing to Limited and Non-English Speakers in Secondary Schools," *English Journal*, 68 (November, 1979), p. 38.

[2]NAFSA *Newsletter*, 31 (May, 1980), p. 202.

[3]Jeanne W. Halpern & Dale Mathews, "An Informal Discussion with Mina Shaughnessy," *English Journal*, 69 (March, 1980), p. 33.

[4]The program is sponsored by the American Association of University Women and the United States International Communication Agency and was conducted at American University, Washington, D.C., from 1975-1979.

[5]Participants in the 1978 and 1979 programs came from a wide variety of Sub-Saharan countries: Botswana, The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, and Zambia.

[6]This article focuses on the years 1978 and 1979, when the program was co-directed by the author. I am indebted to my co-director, Ann Ferren, for her continual support; while the program was jointly planned and administered, she is not responsible for the conclusions that I have drawn in this article.

[7]In many African countries, the medium of instruction becomes English when children are about eleven years old. The transition to English is sometimes too abrupt for children to make a smooth adjustment, particularly when English is not spoken in the home. ■

Robert A. Schwegler
M. Beverly Swan
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Sentence Combining and Paragraph Building with Warriner's

SENTENCE COMBINING gets a lot of attention these days in journal articles, on conference programs, and during in-service presentations. There is good reason for all this interest: the central strategy of sentence combining—working with very short (kernel) sentences and combining them into longer, more complex units—has proven to be a successful way to address weaknesses in student writing. And the increased syntactic complexity which results from sentence combining correlates highly with improved writing quality.[1]

Though sentence combining can be very effective, it is not an instant panacea, and it poses problems that can discourage many teachers from using it in their classes. Sentence combining is a developmental process, and as such requires time. Students need to work on sentence-combining problems several times a week, at least ten minutes each time, over at least ten weeks if their sentences are to grow in length, complexity, and effectiveness. Finding the necessary class time in a structured curriculum can be a problem, yet the results of research and classroom experience indicate it is well worth the effort. Finding the necessary materials, however, can be a lot more difficult.

A fifteen minute sentence-combining exercise for eleventh graders might require as least ten short sentences for students to combine into longer, fluent sentences that make a point. Even for someone experienced in writing s-c exercises, coming up with fresh and interesting ideas, composing the sentences, and checking them for misleading elements can mean considerable work. For teachers with 115 students and 3 (or 4) preparations, finding the time to write s-c exercises can be next to impossible. Yet sentence combining does not have to be just another good idea that goes nowhere because of the excessive demands placed on classroom teachers. Standard textbooks like Warriner's *English Grammar and Composition*[2] provide numerous ready-made sentences which can be easily broken down into kernels for student use. Ideally, of course, book budgets ought to include at least a single set of one of the sentence-combining texts that have recently appeared on the market;[3] for teachers in most schools, however, creative use of existing resources may be the only option for quite a while.

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Sentence Combining

Writing sentence-combining exercises is not a difficult task,[4] and a textbook which provides a ready stock of sentences can help prevent it from becoming a time-consuming one. A single sentence-combining exercise provides a series of short (kernel) sentences which students are asked to combine into a longer unit either according to specific directions (CUED) or in a manner of their own choosing (UNCUED). In CUED exercises the teacher determines the desired pattern. In UNCUED the students have the option of selecting their own pattern. A combination of CUED and UNCUED is often desirable since using only UNCUED exercises affords students the opportunity to avoid new structures and rely on those with which they feel most secure.

CUED exercise

Kernels: Washington said something.
He wanted no third term.

Instructions to students: *Combine the following kernels in the manner suggested by the CUE:*
Washington said something. (THAT)
He wanted no third term.

Desired result:
Washington said that he wanted no third term.
(materials from Warriner, *English Grammar and Composition: Fifth Course* [1977], p. 62)

UNCUED Exercise

(from Warriner, *Complete Course* [1967], p. 116)

Kernels: Great literature stirs the imagination.
Great literature challenges the intellect.

Directions: *Combine the two kernels above into a coherent sentence.*

Some possible results:

1) Great literature stirs the imagination, and it also challenges the intellect.
2) Great literature stirs the imagination and challenges the intellect.
3) Great literature which stirs the imagination challenges the intellect.
4) Great literature stirs the imagination because it challenges the intellect.
5) Stirring the imagination, great literature challenges the intellect.

Teachers can use the student sentences as a basis for class discussion, pointing out what is accomplished by the different structures.

Instructors who turn to the various volumes of Warriner's *English Grammar and Composition* (grades 7-12) for help in writing s-c problems will find a variety of useful sentences, plausible and interesting in content, appropriate for each grade level. Chapters on sentence parts, phrases, and clauses, for example, include exercises in recognizing specific features and identifying errors. Each set of exercises contains upwards of ten sentences, many of which can be quickly rewritten for sentence combining practice:

Warriner's sentence: Once inhabited by American Indians and dreaded by pioneers, the deserts of the Southwest are now popular areas for business and recreation. *(Complete Course* [1977], pp. 38-39, "The Adjective Clause")

CUED

Directions: *Combine the following kernels in the manner suggested by the CUE.*

Kernels: The deserts of the Southwest were once inhabited by American Indians.
The deserts of the Southwest were dreaded by pioneers.
(AND)
The deserts of the Southwest are now popular areas for business.
The deserts of the Southwest are now popular areas for recreation. (AND)

Possible results: The original sentence from Warriner's *or* The deserts of the Southwest, once inhabited by American Indians and dreaded by pioneers, are now popular areas for business and recreation.

UNCUED

Directions: *Combine the following kernels into a coherent sentence.*

Kernels: As above, without the cues.

Possible results: The Warriner's sentence or Although once inhabited by American Indians and dreaded by pioneers, the Southwestern deserts are now popular areas for business and recreation.

Whatever the result, it is important to stress that the goal need not be the original sentence from the text.

The newly-created s-c exercises can illustrate and reinforce principles covered in the text; yet because they ask students to put principles into action and then observe and discuss the results, the exercises can also provide effective instruction without use of the text.

When the Warriner's sentences contain errors, as in the following examples of faulty parallelism, a teacher simply needs to make the necessary corrections before breaking the sentences down into kernels:

Warriner's sentences *(Complete Course* [1977], p. 242):

1) Its large size, simple structure, and how readily available it is, make the common cockroach convenient to study.
2) Cockroaches have smooth leathery skin, long thin antennae, and then have a body that is thick and flat.

UNCUED kernels:

1) The common cockroach is large in size.
The common cockroach has a simple structure.
The common cockroach is readily available.
These make the common cockroach convenient to study.
2) Cockroaches have smooth skin.
Cockroaches have leathery skin.
Cockroaches have long antennae.
Cockroaches have thin antannae.
Cockroaches have a body that is flat.
Cockroaches have a body that is thick.

Possible results (sentence 1):

a) Its large size, simple structure, and availability, make the common cockroach convenient to study.
b) Because it has a simple structure, is large in size, and is readily available, the common cockroach is convenient to study.
c) The common cockroach is convenient to study because of its large size, simple structure, and availability.

Once students become adept at working with kernel sentences, however, they can eliminate errors themselves by "retrieving" the kernels. For example, problems in parallelism can be eliminated by having students find the kernels in a sentence and recombine them into a correct sentence, perhaps with the aid of a cue supplied by the teacher:

Sentence with error *(Fifth Course* [1977], p. 247).
Dentists advise us to cut down on sweets and brushing our teeth after each meal.

Might yield:
Dentists advise something.
We should cut down on sweets.
We should brush our teeth after each meal.

CUED (To/infinitive):
Dentists advise us to cut down on sweets and to brush our teeth after each meal.

(Even the UNCUED method would probably not yield an error.)

Paragraph Building

Many of the exercise sets in Warriner's are short essays broken up into a series of numbered sentences. These, along with the sample paragraphs the text contains (often short essays in themselves), can be turned into longer sentence-combining exercises that give students experience in creating paragraph-length structures. In an uncued form, moreover, such exercises give students a chance to try out different options for organizing and creating emphasis in paragraphs. The sentences in a series can be broken down into kernel sentences which students can be directed to combine into a coherent paragraph. These three

sentences, the opening of a series of twenty on the metric system, illustrate the process:

Warriner's sentences (*Complete Course* [1977], p. 27):

1) Your weight, according to the doctor, is 55 kilograms.
2) Should you drop sundaes from your diet or add them to it?
3) Your ability to decide depends upon your working knowledge of the metric system.

Kernels:

1) Your weight is 55 kilograms.
2) This is according to the doctor.
3) Should you drop sundaes from your diet?
4) Should you add sundaes to your diet?
5) You have the ability to decide.
6) Your ability depends upon your working knowledge.
7) The knowledge is of the metric system.

Possible yield so far:

If your weight is, according to the doctor, 55 kilograms, should you drop sundaes from your diet or add them to it? Your ability to decide depends upon your working knowledge of the metric system.

The different possibilities students find in the material can be the basis of concrete discussions of the relationship between aim, strategy, and style, particularly if the teacher distributes copies of the most interesting student efforts.

But paragraph-length s-c exercises generally do not deal effectively with the options presented by paragraphs in expository essays. Such paragraphs are not constructed in a vacuum; the strategies employed must be chosen on the basis of information contained elsewhere in the essay. Both the pattern of development and the distribution of emphasis within an expository paragraph are determined to a considerable extent by the arguments that precede and follow it within the essay, and traditional s-c exercises generally lack this vital information.

Because they present only the sentences that go into a paragraph, s-c exercises either encourage students to regard the paragraph as a complete unit in itself, a mini-essay, or ask students to do two major tasks at once—construct a paragraph and create imaginatively an essay context for the paragraph. In neither case does the student get effective exercise in constructing paragraphs that respond in structure and emphasis to the essay in which they belong. Adding transitions or similar signals to the sentences that are to be combined into a paragraph will not solve the problem because signals of this sort are usually too subtle for most students. Instead, the scope of s-c exercises needs to be expanded to include what might be called "paragraph building."

Paragraph-building exercises contain not only the sentences to be combined into a paragraph, but also information about the aim (even pattern) of the potential paragraph and about its role in the essay as a whole:

Instructions: *The information below comes from a larger essay whose purpose is to show that in business, politics, and science, successful people are the ones who take the obvious and make it work for them. Combine the following sentences into a coherent and well-developed paragraph which focuses on the scientist and the layman as examples of the difference between successful and average people.*

1) The scientist and the layman are different.
2) The scientist frequently draws conclusions from simple phenomena.
3) The layman frequently cannot draw conclusions from simple phenomena.
4) People had seen apples fall from trees for centuries.
5) Issac Newton saw apples fall from trees.
6) Falling apples stimulated Isaac Newton to thought.
7) Issac Newton developed his theory of gravitation.
8) Galileo observed the swinging of a lantern in a cathedral.
9) Galileo was stimulated to thought.
10) Galileo developed his theory about pendulums.
11) Fleming's discovery is more rece. .
12) Fleming paused to consider a ring around mold.
13) He thought about the origin of the ring.
14) Fleming eventually discovered penicillin.
15) One must see the relation between cause and effect to come upon an important scientific discovery.
16) It takes the trained mind to see the relation between cause and effect.

Hints: Since the observation leads to the discovery, you might want to make use of connecting words like "thus," "as a result," "from," and "eventually."

This exercise consists of a paragraph from Warriner's *Grade 11* [1958], pp. 363-364) broken down into kernels. The paragraph stands alone in the text, so it was necessary to create an imaginary essay for the opening directions, but this is an easy task—for a teacher. The examples in the chapters on paragraphing in Warriner's and similar texts are particularly useful for creating this kind of exercise because they have been chosen as illustrations of different patterns of development. The "hints" which come at the end of the exercise are cues for the students to follow; a fully CUED version would have expanded opening directions and would combine the "hints" with the kernel sentences in the manner of CUED s-c exercises.

Paragraph Rebuilding

The success of both s-c and paragraph-building exercises is not affected if the teacher makes them up from the same text students are using in class. Encouraging students to compare their work with the original is a good idea, an updated version of what Roger Ascham suggested four hundred years ago:

> *. . . choose out some* Epistle Ad Atticum, *some notable commonplace out of his* Orations, *or some other part of Tully Cicero, by your discretion, which your scholar may know where to find; and translate it you yourself into plain, natural English; and then give it him to translate into Latin again, allowing him good space and time to do it . . . . When he bringeth it translated unto you, bring you forth the place of Tully; lay them together; compare the one with the other; commend his good choice and right placing of words; show his faults gently, but blame them not oversharply . . . .*[5]

Breaking sentences down into kernels and recombining the kernel sentences is the modern equivalent of translation. While Ascham and students in his time assumed that the original would

always be better than the student version, some of our students are sure to prefer their own versions—and they may well be right, at least in part.

A paragraph rebuilding exercise in its early stages is identical to a paragraph-building exercise in that students are given a series of kernel sentences to combine into a coherent paragraph. After completing their work, students receive a copy of the original paragraph or are directed to the appropriate page in the text. At this point, the teacher tries to guide discussion to matters of structure, style, and aim by asking students to compare the writing options they chose with those employed in the original. If discussion comes on a day following the writing, interesting student paragraphs can be distributed on a handout along with a copy of the original paragraph and some thought-provoking questions. The follow-up ditto for the "Scientist-Layman" exercise might look like this:

Here is the original version of the paragraph:

The difference between the scientist and the layman is frequently the ability to draw conclusions from simple phenomena. Thus, people had seen apples fall from trees for centuries; but to Isaac Newton, this act stimulated him to thought. Eventually his theory of gravitation developed. From observing the swinging of a lantern in a cathedral, Galileo was stimulated to develop his theory about pendulums. More recently, Fleming, by pausing to consider the origin of a ring around a mold, eventually discovered penicillin. It takes the trained mind to see the relation between cause and effect, and thus come upon an important scientific discovery.

Some important questions to consider:

1) How does your paragraph compare with the original? Is it better or weaker? Why?
2) Were you careful in wording the opening sentence so that it was a fit topic sentence for the material contained in the rest of the paragraph?
3) Did you pay attention to the devices you used to link sentences together, particularly transition words? Do your sentences vary in length as well as in style?

Here is a student version of the paragraph. How does it compare with the original?

In order to make a scientific discovery one must see the relation between cause and effect, and this takes a trained mind. It is here that the difference between the scientist and the layman is most evident. The scientist frequently draws conclusions from simple phenomena whereas the layman cannot. For many years people had seen apples falling from trees, but it wasn't until Isaac Newton, stimulated by these falling apples, developed his theory of gravity. Galileo's observation of a swinging lantern in a cathedral resulted in his pendulum theory. A more recent discovery made by Fleming was inspired by a ring around some mold. After he contemplated the origin of this ring, Fleming eventually discovered penicillin.

Class discussion of the two versions on the handout might center on how well each one helps the "essay" accomplish its aim or on the relative stylistic or organizational merits of each paragraph. Sometimes discussions can go in unexpected but valuable directions, and students may even feel tempted to offer their own efforts as alternative solutions to the problems posed by the exercise.

The demonstrated effectiveness of sentence combining and the potential effectiveness of paragraph building are good arguments for making both part of an English curriculum. Lack of materials can sometimes stand in the way of good teaching, but if instructors can make good use of existing classroom texts, they will find it easy to make sentence combining and paragraph building part of their teaching.

NOTES

[1]See John C. Mellon, *Transformational Sentence-Combining* (Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1969); Frank O'Hare, *Sentence Combining: Improving Student Writing without Formal Grammar Instruction* (Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1973); Warren E. Combs, "Further Effects of Sentence-Combining Practice on Writing Ability," *Research in the Teaching of English*, 10 (1976), 137-149.

[2]John E. Warriner, Joseph Mersand, and Francis Griffith, *English Grammar and Composition*, 6 vols. (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1977); since 1958 the series has appeared in five editions, each containing numerous changes. Individual volumes in the series have been sometimes designated by grade number and sometimes by title (e.g. *Third Course* [grade 9], *Complete Course* [grade 12]).

[3]William Strong, *Sentence Combining: A Composing Book* (New York: Random House, 1973); Donald A. Daiker, Andrew Kerek, and Max Morenberg, *The Writer's Options: College Sentence Combining* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979).

[4]Charles R. Cooper, "An Outline for Writing Sentence-Combining Problems," *English Journal*, 62 (January, 1973), 96-102, 108.

[5]*The Scholemaster*, ed. Edward Arber (Westminster: Constable, 1895), p. 88; spelling and punctuation modernized.

Thomas J. Morrissey

The Research Paper:

What Not to Teach in Freshman English

OVER THE PAST DECADE and a half, a flood of books and articles has inundated writing teachers with ideas concerning what should be taught in freshman English. Much of this work has been very valuable, but in order to implement the most innovative practices we must have adequate class time. Most of us will never feel we have enough time no matter what, but a few frank discussions of what *not* to teach in freshman composition might ameliorate things just a little. Number one on my list of things not to do in freshman English is the research paper. It isn't that it shouldn't be taught; it simply does not belong in freshman composition and should not be taught by English faculty.

After ten or so years of trying to get students in English 101 to write well researched and documentary papers, I reluctantly reached three conclusions: (1) the research paper takes up too much of the time students should be devoting to developing writing skills; (2) the size and complexity of the assignment encourages students to plagiarize; and (3) English teachers as a group have neither the expertise nor the time to teach the research process. At the same time, however, the inadequacy of student research papers suggested that someone had to do something to help students realize that perfect footnotes and bibliographies (which are a rarity to be sure) are worthless if the author of the essay has not made the most efficient use of the library.

For years my colleagues and I had struggled with these problems. Many of us had dutifully paraded our students through the library pointing out such useful resources as the card catalog and pertinent indexes. Although with a little study we could have upgraded our presentations, it would clearly have been a problem for the library staff had each English instructor decided to bring all of his or her composition classes to the library for fifteen or twenty hours of instruction. In any case, we simply did not have the time to do this. A few of us occasionally arranged for librarians to conduct these orientation visits, but the whole business was rather haphazard.

In 1977 Dr. Dennis Kimmage of the library's Reference Department cooperated with me in setting up a pilot program of library instruction to aid students in English 101. In addition to his training in library science, Dr. Kimmage also had had six years of classroom experience as a teacher of Russian before becoming a librarian, and nearly all of the other reference librarians had either taught library skills courses at other institutions or bibliography classes for students here at Plattsburgh. Under the plan students in selected sections of Composition spent one week of class time in the library under the direction of trained professionals. Each class had a single research assignment. After the week of library instruction, students returned to their regular classes where their instructors discussed how to shape and present the material they had found. The pilot project was a qualified success. Student papers improved and English faculty were convinced that the librarians had something to offer. However, the primary problem mentioned above—the time taken up by the research paper—was not solved in any way.

Based on our findings, the English Department and the library joined in proposing that the primary responsibility for teaching library skills be transferred from the English faculty to the library staff. In the academic year 1979-80, a one-credit library skills requirement designed by Dr. Kimmage was added to the college's General Education Program. At the same time the research paper was replaced in English 101 by what we chose to call a "documented essay." The results of the experiment are indeed promising.

Under the new program, students learn general bibliographic skills in the library. They perform weekly assignments in accessing and documenting information and take periodic quizzes to test these skills. In all, they spend one hour per week in class for one semester and perform about two hours per week on in-the-library assignments. One significant feature of the plan is that while working on assignments students can readily consult with members of the reference staff. In English 101 they write a modified documented essay. Rather than produce a full-blown research paper, students do a limited amount of research and documentation as part of one or two of their regular assignments.

One documentation assignment that I have used with success is as follows. I directed students to read a group of seven related essays in the reader I was using in the course (in this case *Subject and Strategy*, ed. Eschholz and Rosa). After reading the essays, they were to select a topic and then find two additional periodical sources in the library. Finally, they were asked to write a short paper incorporating four of the seven articles from the reader and the two outside sources. Since I spend only a few minutes talking about research techniques, I have ample time to discuss the substance of the papers and review rough drafts. In the spring 1980 semester, more of my students earned A's and B's on this assignment than on any other paper I assigned—the exact opposite of my experience with the old research paper requirement. Furthermore, I am convinced that they learned more about the function of research as part of the thinking

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and writing process than they ever did under the old system.

One drawback to our new plan, however, is that in the fall term some students in English 101 are not simultaneously enrolled in Library Skills 101. The reason for this is simple: we have just so many seats in each course; hence, the students enrolled in the library course in the fall will sometimes not take English 101 until the spring. This situation is still better than before, however, when students were asked to write research papers without adequate instruction. An additional benefit, though, is that overall student use of the library has increased during the past year and a half, a fact that the Library Director attributes to the advent of LIB 101.

Contrary to what one might expect, the library skills course has not put an undue strain on the college's limited budget resources. The library now handles about 1200-1400 students per year in LIB 101. This amounts to about twenty sections per semester and two more in the summer session. The course is taught primarily by reference librarians, though members of other units also participate. During 1979-80 and 1980-81 about 40% of each reference librarian's time was spent in teaching LIB 101; thus, it is true that some of the tasks they would have normally performed were left undone. Beginning in the fall of 1981, however, positions currently assigned to other units of the library will be reassigned to Reference, which will reduce each reference librarian's commitment to teaching to only 20% of his or her time. Thus far the only non-library funds utilized amount to the cost of two sections taught by part-time faculty. Another two sections offered in the summer are self-supporting. Although this amount is likely to increase somewhat, it will be a small price to pay for such a worthwhile program.

In conclusion I think that if the primary responsibility for teaching writing lies with English departments—as I believe it does—then English faculty must candidly assess their own skills to determine what portion of the burden might better be borne by others. In the case of the research process, there is no question about the fact that reference librarians are the best potential academic support personnel to do the job. ■

Evaluating Novels for Young Adults

Seeking Excellence in Reading

IT WAS THE HOPE of the editor when this column was inaugurated last year that it would generate a new look at literary selections for classroom teaching and recommendations for student reading. The response of teachers in the Kingston City Schools, therefore, is most welcome. Robert L. Tucker, Supervisor of English, has undertaken a book review project with members of the Kingston staff. Two reviews of old favorites and one of a contemporary novel are included in this issue.

In addition, two reviews were sent to us by someone who wished to remain anonymous, a former student now employed by a publisher. He reviewed one novel which had received "rave" reviews when published in 1977 and one which seems to have been overlooked although, in the opinion of the reviewer, it has merit.

Naomi Zieph Katcher

The Greek Way

by Edith Hamilton

Bright students in grades nine and ten will benefit from reading *The Greek Way*, referring to those chapters that reflect personal interest: art, history, writing, drama, science and/or religion. Edith Hamilton's uncluttered, unassuming style and wise perception add to this book about Ancient Greece, making clear to us why this historical period was unique, how it attained this uniqueness, and what those qualities mean to us today.

The reader does not have to be a student of Greek drama or history to benefit from and to enjoy *The Greek Way*. Hamilton informs us about the ideals, the art, and the religious aspirations of the Greeks as she examines the lives and spirit of individuals, from Aeschylus to Xenophon. She discusses, in the chapter on religion, the problem modern readers have with the behavior of the ancient gods. How can an intelligent person believe in gods who, in Hamilton's words, are "sometimes like rebellious subjects and sometimes like naughty children"? Her answer is illuminating for both the student reader and the teacher.

While some sections of *The Greek Way* should be read in their entirety—notably Chapters I, II, XV, XVI, and XVII—others can be sampled as the reader chooses.

Robert L. Tucker
Kingston High School

Tess of the D'Urbervilles

by Thomas Hardy

In an age where morality is a matter of individual choice, especially for young adults who are not in many cases prone to consider or even conceive of consequences, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* provides an interesting vehicle for comparing modern and Victorian morality. It raises questions for the reader about what factors cause one individual to condemn or judge another, examining how the age in which one lives affects the individual.

The story tells of the life of a young woman, Tess, a beautiful, sensitive, hard-working country girl of sixteen, swept by circumstances into an unhappy relationship with a faded aristocrat much older than herself. She is seduced by Alec and left with a young baby.

Tess, although a victim of circumstances and of the advances of a man she despises, resists her fate bravely. She has her baby without Alec knowing of her condition and, after the baby dies, she leaves home. In time, she meets Angel Claire, a man of gentility, sensitive to music, poetry, and the arts, as well as to Tess's beauty. The tragedy that befalls these two young people is the heart of the story.

Hardy, skillfully using the scene to reflect the mood, has woven the story of Tess's romance with Angel Claire into a tapestry of pastoral life on an English dairy farm with early morning mists and the exquisite colors of the countryside. His thesis, that Angel Claire and Tess are both

victims of the pressures of nature and the society's Victorian moral outlook, is one which students can understand and discuss.

Hardy brilliantly examines those events which, when linked together, create an unforgettable dramatic observation of human character, destiny, and the unpredictable. Advanced and mature students in grade ten will find this book fascinating. The reader should, however, have a dictionary close at hand and be prepared for some literary allusions, the knowledge of which will deepen an understanding of the author's intent.

Dorothy Sernaker
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Mockingbird by Walter Tevis
(Bantam Books)

Mockingbird is a fine example of a book I'd like to recommend to some young people but which should not be used as a common text, except perhaps with a class of selected students. The major theme of this book is one which cries out for attention and to which many of us are devoted. It is, quite simply, the value and beauty of reading and writing.

Living in a future society where drugs, television and illiteracy are embraced, Bentley, the protagonist, stumbles on reading and writing. It is his pursuit of these now arcane skills that provides the book's plot with direction. At one point in talking about reading, Bentley says,

> What I like most is the strange sensation I get in the little hairs at the back of my neck when I read certain sentences. And, oddly enough, these are sentences that are often quite unclear to me, or that make me sad. I still remember this one from my days in New York:
>
> *'My life is light, waiting for the death wind,*
> *Like a feather on the back of my hand.*

Bentley's pursuit becomes an obsession which drives him to seek out books and find them, in old libraries now forgotten and neglected. He struggles through everything from *Basic Chess Endings* to Conrad and T.S. Eliot, aided by his dictionary and his hunger for knowledge. We are made painfully aware of what reading is and what it can do for the human spirit, a lesson we need to relearn.

Bentley keeps a journal and learns the value, pain and satisfaction of putting one's thoughts on paper. He also uses "A-V equipment" from a Sears store, but he comments about the lesser satisfaction derived from talking into a tape recorder:

> I wish I could be writing these words down, instead of dictating them. For it must be writing, as much as reading, that has given me this strong sense of my new self.

Lest I leave you thinking that the book is simply an essay on the importance of finding self through reading and writing, I add quickly that it has adventure, romance, and suspense in great gobs, making its message emerge more gracefully than the examples shown here. Why then should this book not be used as a common text with most students?

The author's desire to make the plot move, to add suspense, and to advance his scenes in a dramatic fashion limits the depth to which he can examine even the principal characters. They do not quite measure up to the importance of the theme, and this imbalance denies stature to this fine novel. While *Mockingbird* raises some worthwhile questions about our visual society, it does so in a manner which detracts from its suitability as a class text for all but those students who need relatively easy reading.

The story's fast pace will draw these students into an examination of these important ideas. The sexual and religious incidents in the story will challenge the interest of the more mature adolescent. *Mockingbird* is a fine book to use with students whose perceptions are attuned to the visual but who are ready to move forward.

Robert L. Tucker
Kingston High School

Marvin and Tige by Frankcina Glass
(Fawcett Crest)

The idea that an eleven-year-old black, orphaned street urchin and an alcoholic, sensitive, white, former advertising executive could create a haven in which both are able to grow and gain strength is a spurious conceit devised to tug at the heart strings of adult romantics who still believe in Santa Claus. The relationship between the man and the boy as well as their relationship with other characters is predictable and trite. The characters are flat, the story line is obvious, and the book is cheap. This is soap opera at its worst.

Prove Yourself A Hero
by K. M. Peyton (Dell Books)

The strength of *Prove Yourself A Hero* is found in the important questions it raises; its weakness lies in the fact that the questions, once raised, are never satisfactorily resolved or properly explored. Nonetheless, this story dealing with class differences and adolescent fears is worthwhile reading for young people.

An English public school boy is kidnapped for the large ransom that his self-made and newly wealthy parents can afford. The aftermath of the kidnapping is even more traumatic than the act itself, as sixteen year-old Jonathan Meredith attempts to cope with feelings of guilt. At a critical moment, Jonathan believes he has "failed" his parents and permitted them to be placed in an embarrassing and damaging situation.

Jonathan's friend, Peter, is the son of working-class parents who only permit him to attend the legally allowable minimum number of school days so that he can spend his time working in the family-owned stables. The boys have a healthily competitive and truly caring friendship. Their problems do not stem from their different economic backgrounds but from their perceptions of their parents' expectations.

Jonathan and Peter show an awareness and a sensitivity to their respective stations in life at the same time that they try to deal with the problems of maturation. The reawakening of Jonathan's childhood fears and his need to vindicate himself are central to the story line. Unfortunately, a trite and slick ending limits the development of this theme.

Because *Prove Yourself A Hero* is fairly well-written, the characters express themselves with a certain flair and a welcome sophistication. The author does not patronize the characters and their responses and reactions have validity. ■

New York Teachers Serve As Judges for Achievement Awards in Writing

Some English teachers who do a lot of work for very little recognition are the judges and coordinators of NCTE's Achievement Awards in Writing Program. Some have served for a good number of years in the last twenty-four years that the program has been in existence.

The program begins each year in March and April, when NCTE invites the judges to serve. The state chair receives the responses to the invitations and makes up the judging roster. The state coordinator forms the judges into teams, having one college and one high school person on each team.

The English teachers of New York State owe a debt of gratitude toward the following people who have represented our state this year.

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